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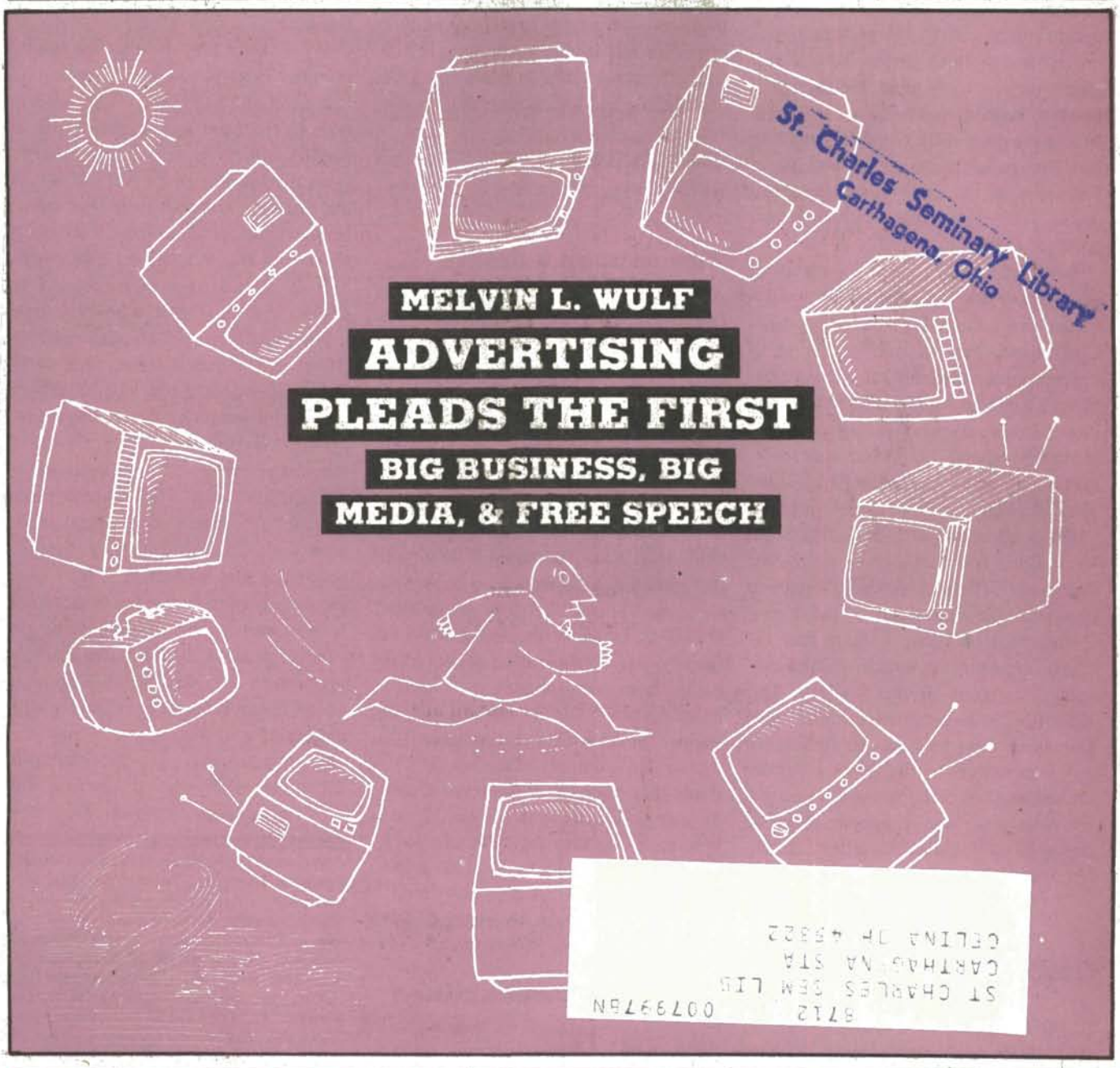

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CORRESPONDENCE

Which way Garvey?

Cobden, Ill.

To the Editors: As often happens, John Garvey's column — this time "Christianity and Morality" [November 21] — moved me to think about matters still rather unclear in my mind. He says what needs to be said, and for this I am grateful. I have great difficulty understanding how one who professes to believe in Jesus can, at the same time, attempt to use (*sic*!) him for "righteous" social and political causes.

But how far does Garvey's argument go? I agree that we must try to avoid a Christian politics. May we also say that a Christian social doctrine is a kind of oxymoron inadmissible for one who believes? And that bureaucratic treatises on peace and economics, resting solidly on the sand of social "science," may represent a refusal to accept the Gospel, the Way of Jesus?

Thinking about such questions is not easy. But I feel that Garvey makes the task more difficult through his choice of examples. To understand — and live — the teaching of Jesus, we must face the specific situation in which we find ourselves, citizens of *this* society. Our examples, to be instructive, must come from here. If we have trouble finding the apt experience in the lives of those around us, then perhaps this is a sign that we must seek more diligently to be an exemplary experience *for* others. An uncomfortable thought.

LEE HOINACKI

God's instrument

Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y.

To the Editors: Half way through David B. Noble's piece on Messiaen ["Intoning Reverence," December 5], it struck me as funny that the composer chose to represent God with a "French electronic keyboard," the ondes. It may well work musically, but theologically it seems ridiculous to have the consummate, the ultimate, the perfect Person of all persons represented by a clever machine, all in the interest of depicting His "impassibility" and/or "the sense of the presence of the 'unchanging' " (though I don't think those two ideas are exactly synonymous). Not only ironic, but perhaps indicative of serious flaws in Messiaen's understanding of God, and reality in general.

But never mind; I'm sure it sounds great.

SALLY CAMPBELL

The ashcan school

West Point, Nebr.

To the Editors: I take no particular pleasure in letting my *Commonweal* renewal notice drop in the ash-can, for I have been a part of the magazine's readership for something over fifty years. Proud of it, led by it, formed by it much of that time. What I miss is precisely the old *Commonweal* stance of being uncommon, of leading. What I no longer care to abide is its nearly paranoid following of the accepted AP wisdom on church issues: the Vatican, the gays, an inverted feminism, Donahue-theologians and authoritarians. It crops up in almost every piece, from correspondence to review. Even poor old Olivier Messiaen is entrapped for not sticking to his music ["Intoning Reverence," December 5]. I doubt that Michael Williams or George Shuster would recognize themselves in your pages, as they surely would in *The New Oxford Review*, or, for that matter, *The New Republic*. Adios, old friend.

MSGR. FRANCIS SCHMITT

Flawed & unexamined

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: The pessimistic premise of "After the pastoral" by R. Bruce Douglass and William J. Gould, Jr. [December 5] is flawed, undermining their basic argument. They write that the U.S. bishops' pastoral, *Economic Justice for All*, has not "really succeeded in stimulating much debate in the public realm. After a brief flurry of comment in 1984 — most of which was negative — the letter has been reduced to a minor story on the religion pages of major publications."

Where have they been for the last two months? Without doing any research, I can recall that in the two weeks after the bishops' pastoral was approved, the following appeared in "major publications": editorials in the *N.Y. Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*; frontpage articles in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *AFL-CIO News* and the *N.Y. Times* (which also carried a full-page summary of the pastoral and major stories on other days); a one-hour TV special about the pastoral, "God and Money," which ran on the Public Broadcasting System's affiliates across the nation in November; and a syndicated column by Msgr. George G. Higgins referring to various editorials.

Douglass and Gould contend further that the "real reason this pastoral has had such a difficult time getting a serious hearing is that it challenges by its very nature" various assumptions about the U.S. economy. One of these is that even "the committed, active Catholic probably harbors considerable doubt about the utility of anything approaching specific direction from the clergy on matters of economic policy." This fascinating observation, with which I agree in more

(Continued on page 92)

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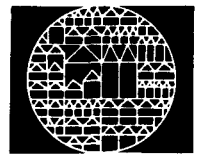

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The family way

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on two cases concerning working mothers and their jobs. In both cases, the Court voted to uphold state laws, although the laws in each case differ substantially. The issues may seem legally technical; but they prod us to think about not only the question at hand — extending maternity leave and protecting post-childbirth job security for the nation's working mothers — but also about the looming problem of reconciling work and family life under changed circumstances.

The first case the Court considered involved a California law requiring an employer to grant up to four months unpaid "pregnancy disability" leave, if medically warranted, and job reinstatement if possible. But the Court also backed a Missouri law which has no job reinstatement provision in its maternity leave policy. In Missouri, a woman who loses her job upon returning from maternity leave is not merely unemployed; she is also ineligible to collect unemployment compensation — just as ineligible as any other Missouri worker who leaves a job "voluntarily," i.e., for reasons not attributable to either the employer or the job. Obviously, a minimal standard leave policy for the nation as a whole could have kept both these cases off the Supreme Court docket. However, the Court upheld a basic states' rights position, which is only one element in the debate.

Another element, seized upon by opponents and proponents alike, is the notion of "preferential treatment." In both cases, the Court agreed that while it is unlawful to discriminate against women in employment because of pregnancy, it is not unlawful to deny them "preferential treatment." But can preferential treatment ever be a requirement of genuine equality? According to Justice Thurgood Marshall, writing the majority opinion in the California case, it can. Marshall explained that by establishing "a benefit floor beneath which pregnancy disability benefits may not drop," California's law "promotes equal employment opportunity" because it "allows women, as well as men, to have families without losing their jobs."

To have a family without losing one's job is precisely what is at stake in this debate which includes, but is not limited to, a measure of equality for women at work. Why insist that maternity leave is a family problem, not merely a women's issue? The figures speak for themselves:

● Today, women comprise 55 percent of the U.S. labor force, and their numbers are increasing. What is more, women of childbearing age comprise the fastest growing segment of the total work force. In 1985, 48 percent of working women had children under one year old. That same year, 65 percent of the nation's married women between the ages of twenty and thirty-four were employed. If these trends continue, by 1995, 80 percent of U.S. women of childbearing age will be working outside the home.

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● Seventy percent of women who work hold jobs out of necessity: they are single, divorced, widowed, or have husbands earning less than $14,000 a year.

● Sixty percent of children born in 1984 can expect to live in a single-parent family before reaching the age of eighteen; nine out of ten of these children will live in female-headed families. By the turn of the century, the number of female-headed families will have increased at more than five times the rate of husband-wife families.

If these data are correct, the majority of this generation of American children will spend at least some portion (if not the entirety) of their childhoods supported solely by their working mothers, if their mothers are lucky enough, healthy enough, and skilled enough to be employed. Clearly then, some minimal standard of maternity leave with compulsory job reinstatement would furnish a bare-bones safety net for the majority of the nation's working families. But even if such a campaign were waged and won, it would be only one small victory in the protracted struggle necessary to save the American family.

One such plan, The Family and Medical Leave Act, sponsored by Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Col.) and Rep. William Clay (D-Mo.) will be reintroduced to Congress this year, after having been stalled in the Senate during the last congressional term. The Act would provide unpaid family leave of up to four months for the birth, adoption, or serious illness of a child or a parent (male or female), and would allow seriously ill workers up to six months of unpaid medical leave. The rights of workers to return to their jobs after such leaves would be ensured, and health benefits, pensions, and seniority rights would also be continued. Furthermore, the proposal contains a built-in strategy to meet the objection to "preferential treatment" raised by its opponents and by women's groups who fear a backlash of discrimination against hiring women who receive preferential treatment. The bill would simply extend benefits to all workers who fit the conditions stipulated for a leave, pre-empting the allegation that one group is "preferred."

Opponents of the bill argue that such liberal benefits would be prohibitively expensive since, though leave is unpaid, temporary help would be required to replace absent workers. Proponents counter that rehiring experienced workers would more than pay for the temporarily incurred costs of hiring substitutes. These costs may, in fact, be too much for small- and medium-size businesses, however, and any feasible parental leave legislation may need to exempt companies with fewer than 100 or 200 employees. The Schroeder-Clay bill now in Congress would apply to companies with at least 15 employees.

What appears to be the strongest objection by opponents of the bill, however, cannot yet be measured: that an American labor market with family leave benefits would send businesses racing ever faster toward employing third-world workers who enjoy no such protections.

Some supporters of the bill, who favor it as a first step in what must become a larger, more comprehensive program of family supports, argue that the bill doesn't go nearly far enough. It assumes employment — full-time employment — before an employee is eligible for fringe benefits. Therefore, the bill would not apply at all to part-time workers. And the leave mandated in the bill is unpaid, giving low-income wage-earners or "the working poor," a benefit that may not be worth the loss of income it entails.

Still, parental leave is hardly an innovation. For years, European mothers have been enjoying an average of five months maternity leave at *full pay*. They also earn higher wages in comparison with male co-workers than U.S. women do with theirs, as well as a host of other family-centered benefits. Economist Sylvia Ann Hewlett reports that 90 percent of French three-year-olds attend government-sponsored pre-schools; parents in Sweden may choose to work six-hour-days until a child is eight years old; working women in Italy receive two years' credit toward seniority with every childbirth. While we certainly do not want to forfeit the vitality of the U.S. economy, we might learn something from our European neighbors about reordering our priorities.

We began this century with the idea of a family wage — that the head of the household, then nearly always a male, should be able to earn a salary that would cover the cost of living for himself, his wife, and his children. Progress toward a genuine family wage was made largely in the decades after World War II. But then came changes in the American family (the rate of divorce, illegitimate births, and the number of female-headed households, to name only a few), accompanied by a slowdown in the wage system. The result is that today wages, especially those earned by most women, simply do not support a family, even one shrunken in size to only one or two children. Thus the "feminization of poverty," and more recently the scandalous rate of increase of children in poverty.

Any proposal for parental leave, whether paid or unpaid,

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will not touch the most needy among us. But a national provision for paid leave with job reinstatement could help the working poor. And unpaid leave could ease the burden of middle-class workers, allowing time for parental bonding between mothers, fathers, and newborn or newly adopted children, as well as extending leave-taking to employees with illnesses requiring more than the annual allotment of sick-days. Such legislation would acknowledge the central place of families in our society and restore the notion that families deserve priority in social programs. This would be a first step worth taking.

STAR WARS FOR STARTERS

Caspar Weinberger has a new proposal. Not Star Wars but what we might call Starlet Wars, a couple of anti-missile missile systems that he would like to see fully deployed in the early 1990s. The cost for these babies in the strategic defense family would be $100 billion or up.

Would Starlet Wars be a good idea? As of now, we haven't heard enough to know. But two things count heavily against this newest initiative. First, it has not been successfully measured against the basic threefold criteria that Paul Nitze and others have set forth for strategic defense: systems must be survivable against enemy attacks; cost less for us to deploy than for the enemy to overcome; and be stabilizing in their effects on the nuclear stand-off. Second, the initiative would breach the ABM treaty, thus shattering one of the few remaining arms-control achievements of the past as well as most hopes for arms control in the future.

According to some critics, that's just the point. Starlet Wars is the camel's nose, the foot in the door. It's meant to evade debate rather than encourage it, to get a bit of Star Wars deployed and a hole punched in the ABM treaty while Ronald Reagan is still in office and before the full scope of his SDI vision can be thoroughly sized up.

Such a maneuver simply won't work, and sympathizers with strategic defense systems really ought to be the first to advise against it. This camel is just *too big*. Obviously, at this point, no one can know with complete certainty whether a defensive shield against nuclear weapons might be technically feasible and strategically stabilizing. That's why even the skeptical (include this journal) favor continuing research. But any full-blown strategic defense system would necessarily be the work of many years—stretching across different presidential administrations and various shifts in the political and economic climate. It would have to be built on a clear understanding and a solid consensus, or it wouldn't be built. To think that prematurely deploying a jerrybuilt system will render the momentum toward a full-blown SDI "irreversible" is wildly unrealistic. Somewhere along the line a program lacking genuine clarity and consensus will encounter enough opposition either to stop it altogether or turn it into a ramshackle compromise on the lines of, well, the MX. A scaled-down instant Starlet Wars promising to provide a quick-and-dirty solution to protecting missile sites might be seen as the hook that would lure wavering politicians into buying Star Wars Sr. on the installment plan. It is more likely to be the boomerang that will damage first the prospects for arms reduction, then whatever merits strategic defense itself may turn out to possess. *Caveat emptor*, but *caveat vendor* as well.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

It was the year 2000 and the president's fifteenth State of the Union Message. He looked not a hair older than during his first such address to Congress in 1982. Following the Great Crash of '89, the repeal of the Twenty-seventh Amendment limiting the number of terms he could serve, and his Democratic successor's indecisive leadership in the Ecuadoran hostage crisis, the president had reclaimed the Oval Office in 1992 with the inspired theme, "It's High Noon in America."

Standing before Congress without a prepared text, the president acknowledged the usual standing ovations. He thanked his listeners around the world to whom the United States was indebted, and his listeners at home for their concern over his most recent surgery. He noted that once again he had left the hospital prior to the average days allotted to his specific DRG, and that if Congress would forgive him the personal anecdote, he had proven catastrophic illness legislation was a concept that had properly died with the long defunct 100th Congress.

Before turning to broader domestic matters, however, the president said he wanted to communicate briefly on foreign policy. He extended anew a warm invitation to Mikhail Gorbachev for a summit meeting. Although the two had met recently for a pre-summit at Reykjavik IV, the prospect of a Washington summit was still one of the president's fondest hopes. He said that at the recent Iceland meeting, arms control had been within a single word of being achieved. Unfortunately, as on other occasions, the aging Mr. Gorbachev had balked during the final communiqué. This time the offensive word was literally Offensive. Mr. Gorbachev had refused to join the president in his new Strategic Offensive Initiative. The president had argued vigorously that SOI was "the path for both sides to a safer future," that SOI would remove the "web of dependency" both superpowers were experiencing since their deployments of SDI.

The president then itemized other recent foreign policy achievements:

- President Pinochet had promised to hold elections in 2009.
- The policy of Constructive Engagement had borne patient fruit: members of South Africa's three-chamber parliament would now be allowed to use the same beaches, although not yet on the same day.
- U.S. hostages abroad would soon be able to vote by

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means of absentee ballots.

● And the privatization of foreign policy had now been completed under Secretary of State H. Ross Perot.

On the domestic side, the president noted that since welfare reform more Americans were working than ever before. His policies had created an excess of 20 million new jobs in the last five years, 3 million of them full-time. He said that his administration was planning to more than double expenditures for the war on drugs, recommending that Congress approve $50,000 for the coming fiscal year. His most controversial new ideas were busing and a proposed standard federal redemption policy. Ever since the gentrification of the inner cities in the 1980s, the majority of minority service workers had been displaced to the townships. Too much U.S. competitiveness

Singing the Cordon Bleus

Now that my wife and I have two full-time jobs and two kids, I have to learn how to cook.

I've been postponing cooking for a long time. I pleaded for an exemption on religious grounds: If the good Lord wanted men mucking around in the kitchen, I'd say, he wouldn't have given women little calloused fingertips to handle hot food and cutlery.

I argued on pragmatic grounds. I'd say that people of all political persuasions, creeds, and ilks should agree that the sexual division of labor made good sense. My wife ran the kitchen and tended the garden while I hunted elephants; she shopped twice a week and I rotated the automobile tires bi-annually. In this way we maintained mutual respect and had the satisfaction of knowing that each of us was a credit to his or her gender.

I argued in terms of genetic inheritance. To me it seemed evident, despite fashionable opinions to the contrary, that people inherit interest and skills. I myself had not been born to be an outstanding cook. There are always too many things to remember and I become confused under pressure. Nor was it pure theory that persuaded me that skills are innate. It was also experience — especially the trauma of organic chemistry. I set a modern-day Dartmouth record for the lowest score on a final examination by a non-football player. In chem lab I got off on the wrong foot. The lab assistant was a senior chem major with a straight A average. "Gee, Cedric," I lick-spittled, "with that kind of GPA, what med school will you go to?" With undisguised disdain he replied, "Med school! Are you kidding? I'm not a mechanic, I'm a scientist!"

With my innate tendency to become discombubulated, I began having accidents. Nobody wanted to be my lab partner. I seemed to drop my thermometer every twenty minutes. I upset the bunsen burner and started a small holocaust. I flushed the substance we were supposed to be precipitating, or provoking, or fudging, and passed in the residue. Finally, following instructions to "add sulfuric acid and mix," I put my thumb over the test tube and shook. To this day I bear on my thumb the crater caused by the explosion.

As a result of this debacle, I disappointed my grandmother by becoming an English professor.

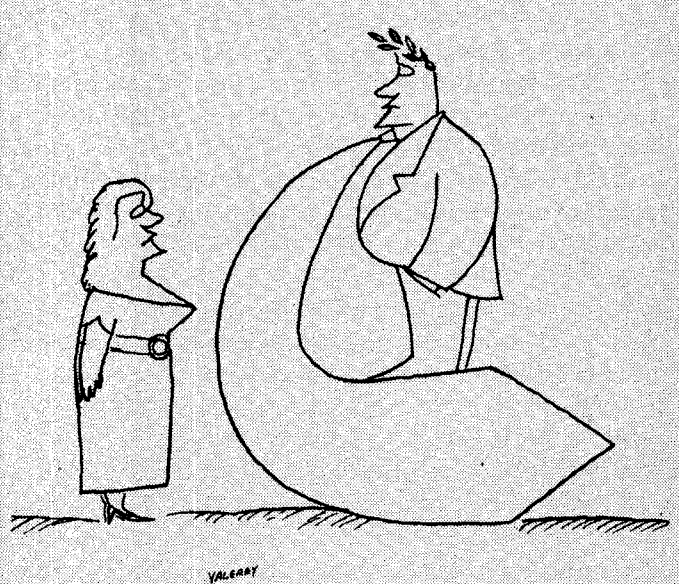
GRANDSON: Well, Nana, you've got another doctor in the family.

NANA: It's the wrong kind of doctor.

Another result is that I feel a little unsure of myself whenever mixing, stirring, and cooking things. I can barely boil H_2O.

I did follow my grandmother's advice in one way — by looking for a Sweet Old-Fashioned Girl. I realized I wasn't going to be much help in the kitchen. Therefore, when it came time to marry, at age fifteen, I found a terrific cook. My wife seemed to fit the bill: from her father she had inherited a Yankee work-ethic; from her mother, brown eyes and Hungarian cuisine.

I should tell you about Hungarians, since mostly they stay close to Budapest or Third Avenue. People who say Hungarians can be easily categorized are simplifying matters. Not all Hungarian men are distinguished scientists, composers, and philanderers; not all the women are sex pots and great cooks. Nor will any two Hungarians in a room start to argue, or any three start a revolution. But they all love good food. You can head off a revolution by serving chicken paprikás. According to Hungarian mythology, the blissful soul becomes a chicken, eternally luxuriating in paprika and sour cream.



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was being wasted in transporting workers the long distances to their employment. What was needed was a new nationwide busing program to join the cities and the townships. And while the president warned he would veto any increase in the minimum wage, he was proposing a new national standard for redeeming bottles. At 7.5 cents a return, this historic 50 percent increase would offer unprecedented incentives to all America's working collectors, those "true heroes of our land who make up the most uncommon doers in history."

The president ended his thirty-two minute, flawless address by looking to the past and to the future. He said he was pardoning all those accused of misconduct in his previous administrations, and planned to present each with an inscribed Bible. As for the future, he was anticipating the resumption of the space program next year in 2001, the twenty-fifth anniversary of his first election to the presidency in 2005, and, with God's help and theirs, celebrating the nation's most important bicentennial in 2014: the two-hundredth anniversary of the burning of the city of Washington.

As the president cantered out of the House chamber, everyone rose in near spontaneous applause. This was indeed the promise of America: there would never be a lame-duck president again.

My wife's mother is the best cook in the western hemisphere, with the possible exception of *her* mother, from whom my mother-in-law received the oral tradition, which she transcribed and passed on to her daughter. Sample recipe: "Dumplings: "1 egg, ½ egg shell of water, walnut-sized lump of lard, and enough flour." Hungarians love confectionary concoctions. A slice of nut-cake contains a pound of butter and sugar and two pounds of walnuts. "Have another slice," offers Grammy, "it's only air." Making cakes out of air is ancient Magyar magic. All summer I train for a marathon, just so I can blimp out at Thanksgiving.

With this Hungarian heritage, my wife instinctively designed an elaborate kitchen. Since I generally steer clear of work areas, I can't say exactly what all she's got in there. I know for a fact there are sharp implements, some of them electric. She has a Cuisinart big enough to propel the *Queen Elizabeth II* (I consider it disrespectful to call the ship the *QE2* on the same grounds that I disapprove of those who refer to His Holiness as Pope J2P2).

I once did the shopping, but shopping requires cooking-related know-how. Despite the numbered aisles, Grand Union is mighty confusing. Say my wife plans a simple supper. I naturally expected the tomato sauce, tomato paste, and canned tomatoes to be together. But Noooo! Worse, my wife (née Sweet Old-Fashioned Girl, now gourmet cook) often asked for items I hadn't heard of and couldn't recognize. Like ginger root. Or capers. Or Belgian endive. I made understandable mistakes. I never could remember the difference between iceberg and Boston lettuce, or between watercress and parsley. I would inevitably buy the most obsolete produce ("Here he comes, fellas, bring out the rotten fruit and limp veggies!").

But all that is in the past. I'm a new man. A guy can grow and change in fifteen years. Come on over and join us for spaghetti some night. You bring the sauce.

ROBERT H. BELL

(Robert H. Bell teaches English at Williams College, and airs his humor on National Public Radio. He contributed "Summer Breakdown" to the September 12, 1986 Commonweal. *To readers grieved by the slip in that article, "Hitch-hiking back to the beach house, a little light bulb went on in my head," Mr. Bell replies: "Being an English teacher, the dangling modifier is terribly embarrassing.")*

HOUSING THE HOMELESS

MANHATTAN'S MARTINIQUE

PORTRAIT OF A HOTEL

The name of Manhattan's Martinique Hotel might suggest tropical warmth, sea breezes, and affluent vacationers. But it is a cruel misnomer for a hotel that has as its clientele over 400 homeless families. The number of children here exceeds 1500. They seem to rise up all around one like shrill vegetation, the kind of vegetation one expects to find in third-world refugee camps, not in a mid-Manhattan hotel.

Across the street from the Martinique stands Macy's and the now moribund Gimbels. A loud river of traffic separates the America of the consumer from the America of the consumed.

The families that live in the Martinique are predominantly single-mother families, black and Hispanic families. They are the victims of batterings, burnouts (both literal and figurative), plain bad luck, and perhaps more than anything, the lack of low-income housing in New York City. A welfare mother of five, receiving a monthly rent allotment of approximately $300, would be hard-pressed these days to find an apartment in any of the city's five boroughs. Should she happen to lose her low-income apartment, or be put out of the apartment of a friend or a relative, or arrive in Manhattan homeless, she would have little choice but to seek emergency assistance from the city. That could mean winding up in the Martinique or in one of the other hotels used to temporarily house homeless families, of which there are an estimated 4000 in New York.

Wilma Jackson, a soft-spoken black woman with seven children, lived in the blighted Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn where she worked as a nurse's aide until her fourth and fifth children (twin girls) were born, forcing her to quit her job and go on welfare. A year ago, the apartment she was

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living in was destroyed by fire. Unable to find another, she was sent to the Martinique.

"I am a Baptist," she says, "and I am afraid of what I see here. Drug-dealing going on. People acting in loose ways. I keep to myself." Huddled with her children in their two rooms, she dreads the fights in the corridors and the rock music that blares at all hours of the night.

In contrast, Azalee Green, also black and the mother of five who has been living at the Martinique for two years, moves among the other mothers with the ease of a woman who was once a social worker. She greets the disoriented new arrivals, advises those who come to her with problems, and does it all with a light touch that belies her background as a battered woman. Also from Brooklyn, she hates the Martinique. But after two years of living here, she is able to put the hotel into perspective. "At first, you see it as a prison, and you think everyone here is a criminal except you. But after a while, you begin to see it as a community. The mothers meet every week to discuss their problems; they try their best to help each other out. It's not all bad like people think."

There is a bitter irony to the poverty here that sets it apart from poverty elsewhere. The mothers receive food stamps, but they have no stoves on which to cook their food. They must use hotplates, which according to hotel regulations are forbidden. They are also alloted $2.13 per person a day in restaurant money, an amount that makes restaurant going an all but futile excursion. "The children do not suffer from malnutrition," says Bob Behr of the Coalition for the Homeless who works with the children at the Martinique, "but they do feel anxiety about food which makes them try to steal food and hoard it."

By far the biggest problem is the overcrowding. Ms. Green and Ms. Jackson both have two rooms for their families. In that cramped space the younger children have no place to play. They must wait for an older brother or sister, or for their mother, to take them to a park or for a walk. Between them, the two mothers have five teenage daughters, on whom the crowding is most cruel. The privacy they need so badly is to be found only in the bathroom. Where there is no privacy, there is no dignity. And where there is no dignity, anger festers — particularly in adolescents.

The overcrowding affects the children's schooling as well. School buses come for them as early as seven in the morning. After a restless night of doubling up in bunk beds and being awakened by the din in the hotel, the children are ill-prepared to study. Ms. Jackson says the teachers often find one of her daughters asleep at her desk. And Ms. Green relates that the reading score of her eleven-year-old has dropped two grades in the two years she has been living at the Martinique. To make matters worse, the children complain that teachers refer to them unflatteringly as "Martinique kids," which serves to further alienate and infuriate the youngsters.

The city pays the owners of the Martinique from $2,000 to $3,000 a month per family. Rents in mid-Manhattan make no distinction between misery and luxury. One often-mentioned solution to the homelessness problem is for the city to renovate abandoned buildings and rent the apartments at low cost. But that takes time. One cuts through bureaucratic red tape slowly, while the number of homeless families in the city is growing rapidly.

A family's stay at the Martinique may range anywhere from a few months to four years. Some find apartments that are reasonable and never return. Others find apartments that are terrible and have to return. Still others try their luck at different hotels, but the problems of one are usually the problems of all.

"It's bad here," concedes Bob Behr. "But it's better than those other massive shelters the city operates where row after row of cots are lined up, and you don't even have a room of your own."

ROBERT HIRSCHFIELD

(Robert Hirschfield is a free-lance writer who has contributed both articles and poetry to Commonweal.*)*

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

THE LINCOLN MYTH

BELIEVING WHAT WE WANT TO BELIEVE

It is a seldom noted fact that Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin were born precisely the same day, February 12, 1809. Had they lived, each man would have celebrated his 178th birthday this year, and God only knows how evolved they would have been by now.

Lincoln, to confine the discussion to him, had certainly gone through a considerable evolution by the time he died, at the age of fifty-six. There is a wonderfully eulogistic account of his development given by his former law partner in Springfield, William Herndon:

> For fifty years God rolled Abraham Lincoln through his fiery furnace. He did it to try Abraham and to purify him for his purposes. This made Mr. Lincoln humble, tender, forbearing, sympathetic to suffering, kind, sensitive, tolerant; broadening, deepening, and widening his whole nature; making him the noblest and loveliest character since Jesus Christ.

This is Lincoln the saint, martyr, and prophet; Lincoln the Moses who set the captives free; Lincoln the Christ-like hero who laid down his life in order that the American republic might live.

But it was the same Herndon who also said of Lincoln: "His ambition was a little engine that knew no rest." For there is another Lincoln, a figure in many respects quite at odds with the one just described. This is the self-made man, the

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ambitious individualist, the great American success story: the poor boy with no formal education who, on the strength of his charm, his mother-wit, and his stick-to-itiveness, rose from log cabin to White House. If the former image is that of Lincoln as Christ, the latter, it may be said, is that of Lincoln as a Horatio Alger hero.

At one and the same time, then, Lincoln is our great national model of both altruism and self-interest. Never has an American been so admired by his countrymen for his self-sacrifice; yet never has one been so admired for his ability to climb the ladder of success. On either account his appeal was bound to be powerful. Put both together, and his appeal to the moral imagination of the nation could not help but be overwhelming, as indeed it has been for 122 years since his death.

If we were a strictly logical nation, I suppose this tremendous impact wouldn't exist. The one side of the Lincoln myth would nullify the appeal of the other. After all, it makes sense to admire someone for being a great altruist; it also make sense to admire someone for being a successful self-seeker; but does it make any sense to admire a person for being both?

It does in America. From time immemorial, the serious moralist has been troubled by the question: Why do the ways of the wicked prosper? Why do the good, like Job, so often come to grief? The chances of achieving in this lifetime both holiness and worldly success have seemed to be, if not exactly nil, then certainly very slim; about as slim, let's say, as the chances of a camel passing through the eye of a needle.

But in America we have long seen these questions differently. Perhaps it goes back to our Puritan forbears, with their fondness for certain portions of the Old Testament (including the rather incongruous conclusion of the book of *Job*) in which God rewards his saints with worldly prosperity. What may be called the vulgar Calvinism of the Puritans (which was not the same thing as the Calvinism of Calvin) pointed the same lesson: election leads to sanctity, sanctity to diligence in one's calling, diligence in one's calling to worldly prosperity. Whatever its source, a perennial element in our national culture is the belief that the problem of evil has been overrated, that sanctity and success are simultaneously achievable.

Lincoln appeals so strongly to us because his life and death confirm that optimistic American belief. This is not to say that the typical American aspires to martyrdom; we'd like to be good, but not quite that good. By the same token, we don't aspire to be president of the United States. Lincoln carried both his goodness and his personal ambition to extremes. He went all the way with something the rest of us hope to carry at most to more moderate lengths. But that is why he continues to symbolize America better than anyone else in our history.

There is an interesting ambiguity in the word "freedom" that should be noticed in this connection. On the one hand, there is what may be called republican freedom or the freedom of the citizen. This is the freedom, indeed the obligation, to be a participant in public affairs. It demands of the citizen the subordination of his or her private interest to the public interest. This is what Benjamin Constant, the early nineteenth-century French political theorist, described as "the freedom of the ancients," referring to the republican city-states of the ancient world.

On the other hand, there is the "freedom of the moderns," the freedom to do as one likes, even if what one likes is to turn one's back on public affairs and to become, in a very strict sense of the word, politically irresponsible. This may be described as the freedom of the individual, in contrast to the freedom of the citizen. So far from demanding the subordination of private to public interest, it licenses nearly unlimited devotion to private interest, provided only that this is done without force or fraud.

Viewed abstractly, these two kinds of freedom seem flatly contradictory to one another. But the American faith is that we can have both at the same time; that together they form a higher synthesis, richer than either the freedom of the ancients or the freedom of the moderns taken separately, combining the best of both. It is this synthesis that Lincoln symbolizes. He is our supreme example of the person free in both senses, as individual and as citizen. Tirelessly pursuing his private interest, he nonetheless totally subordinated that interest to the public good.

We would do well to reflect on the current condition of this marriage between the two freedoms. I hate to spoil the birthday party, but it seems to me that this marriage, like many contemporary marriages, is in trouble — and maybe for the same reason. The two are no longer anything like equal partners. The balance today is tipped dangerously in favor of individual freedom and against republican freedom.

As Gerald Ford once said: "If Abraham Lincoln were alive today, he'd roll over in his grave."

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

ADMIRING WHAT WORKS

THE CHURCH FACES PARTICIPATION

Recently I realized with a start that I had a strong affection for my travel alarm. Because it works. It is a mere sliver of black plastic. I misplace it for weeks at a time — sometimes in a purse into which I dropped it in an absent-minded moment. When it turns up again it is still telling time, winking away at me minute by minute, its mysterious chip-governed mechanism ready to adjust to calling me at any hour. A wholly admirable object. My liking for it is instinctual, perhaps

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irrational. I note now, too, that I have the same feeling for my car, my old typewriter, for a select number of other useful aids to living.

An affection for that which works — for that whose operation is consonant with the intent of the designer — is supposed to be characteristic of Americans. We want things to work. We expect them to. We are pleased when they do and frustrated when they do not. This is one reason — only one, but a compelling one — for our growing unease with the church; as a human institution it doesn't seem to be working. The necessary internal mechanisms aren't there. We are slowly beginning to understand that, and that, without the mechanisms, our hopes for an open church of expanding participation on the part of all the baptized will not be realized.

I was moved to this reflection by the *Commonweal* supplement [December 26] marking the tenth anniversary of A Call to Action, the bishops' bicentennial project which "experimented with a process of consultation on an unprecedented scale." My own involvement with that effort was intense, hopeful, exhausting, in the end disillusioning, but still peripheral. I was not one of the delegates at Detroit, and, thus, did not share the temporary euphoria of the experience there; nor was I a participant in the shared reminiscences of the *Commonweal* symposium a decade later. My memory of the time is somewhat uncertain. Was I on the original list of invited speakers at the first regional hearing here in Washington, D.C., the list which inspired "local protest"? Or was I invited in answer to some protestor's cry that the agenda of the Call, for justice, did not seem to include justice for women? (A look at the discussion guide and at the resolutions shows that women *qua* women got little attention; they were sub-topics under the sections on family and personhood.) At any rate, I received an invitation to testify on "Women in the Church and Society," and I took it very seriously.

"Just think – twenty years ago we'd both have been stuck in the kitchen."

For a Catholic laywoman my credentials for testifying were good at the time. I was a national vice-president of Church Women United, served on the boards of two Catholic women's colleges, was on the advisory boards of the Women's Equity Action League and Women's Campaign Committee, and president of the Washington-based Clearinghouse on Women's Issues. I was consumed by the hope that the growing divisions in the women's movement and the opposition to it could be healed and lessened if we concentrated on economic and educational justice for women. And that the church might espouse that justice and move powerfully for it.

I labored long and hard on that testimony in my effort to persuade others in the church that woman's struggle was a struggle for justice. But even as I talked I knew that I was unheard.

Women as autonomous beings fit neither the preconceptions of those holding hearings nor into their *schema*. As Dolores Curran reminded us, even the issue of women working outside the home was still being hotly debated within the church. The evidence I proffered of the exigencies forcing women into the workplace was no match for the fondly held myth of woman, queen of the home. But perhaps more important, a commitment to economic justice for women would have implied a commitment to a long, wearisome process of dealing with the minutiae of finance and legislation. There were no structures for such a commitment. Better and easier to give some attention to woman in her relational aspects, her place in the family, or even — on the ordination issue — in the church. My testimony disappeared without a trace. When I was asked later to help in rewriting and editing the final documents, I could find no sign of it.

I am struck now with how similar my peripheral experience of high hope and dashed expectation was to the general experience. Hope, however, was justified by the process of consultation itself. The expectations simply outran the possibility of their fruition. On that there is general agreement. "The organization's (i.e., the National Conference of Bishops') capacity to respond to a large reform agenda was distinctly limited," writes David O'Brien, and Cardinal Dearden agrees, "It (the bishops' conference) cannot impose its will on member bishops." Again and again the efforts to achieve a national Catholic approach to goals and problems are bound to run into the intractable structure of geographical parishes, dioceses with arbitrary boundaries, and bishops responsible to Rome and not to each other. Our disappointments have more to do, as the *Commonweal* editors say in another context, with the underdevelopment of democratic mechanisms in the church, than with anything else.

Suppose we celebrate the Bicentennial of the Constitution with a constitutional process of our own in which we turn our attention to the structures and mechanisms of church governance and how they work or could work? They are not immutable. They have already been subject to change and growth. We have heard *ad nauseam* of late that the church is not a democracy. But neither should it be a monarchy, an oligarchy, or a totalitarian state. In its beginning it was much more a limited democracy than anything else. Let us begin the great grave process of reflection on what the purpose of the church as a human institution is — the germs of the reflection are already there in the symposium on the Call to Action. And let us meet eventually to frame a document which would be a foundation for the structures we need. Such a document could be an American gift to the universal church.

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ADVERTISING PLEADS THE FIRST

THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKE-IN

MELVIN L. WULF

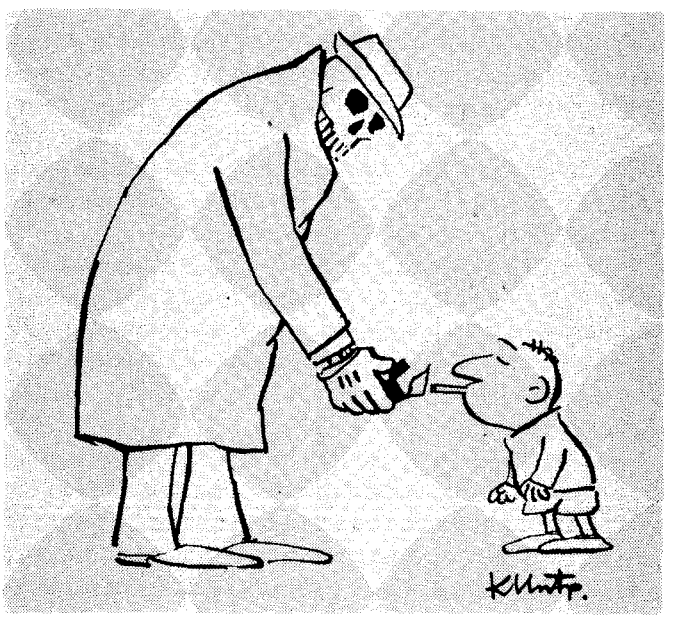
The great free speech struggles of the recent past have risen from the anti-Communist turmoil of the fifties and the civil rights movement and Vietnam War protests of the fifties, sixties, and seventies. With inevitable but minor exceptions, the proponents of freer speech were vindicated. Today there is hardly any political or social issue which will not be heard in the land — if there is anyone to advocate it. But there are two important First Amendment issues on the national agenda which are yet to be resolved, and which will become increasingly visible as their opponents and proponents crank up for major battles. And crank up they will, because, unlike earlier free speech debates which involved poor students, poor blacks, and poor anti-war activists, these proponents and opponents have big bucks and will use them to protect their cash flow:

● First, is whether business advertising is protected by the First Amendment. It comes up most concretely now around the question whether to prohibit cigarette advertising. A bill has been introduced in the House to do just that. The main players in the arena are, one one side, The Tobacco Institute, which represents the industry, and the advertising agencies which have $2 billion of billings at stake. If the two industries with their obvious vested interests were alone in the struggle, it might not be taken too seriously. But the ACLU is also on their side, lending the industry some respectability. The fact that the ACLU is wrong in this case, does not detract from its seriousness of purpose.

On the other side are the American Medical Association and The American Cancer Society. Both have announced their support for a total ban on cigarette advertising.

● Second, is the First Amendment's application to television and radio broadcasting. Here the principal issue involves the fairness doctrine. The doctrine, a creation of the Federal Communications Commission, requires broadcasters to include programming on public issues and to give fair coverage to both sides of those issues. A second issue is whether radio and television are required to sell advertising time to whoever demands it. These are significant issues because of the enormous persuasive power inherent in television broadcasting. The main question is: Should broadcasters have the exclusive power to decide for themselves what to broadcast, or should Congress, representing the public interest, impose affirmative broadcasting obligations on the stations?

On the issue of tobacco advertising, who could quarrel with the claim that the world would be healthier if its inhabitants didn't smoke? It is an irrefutable scientific fact — no matter what fatuous denials The Tobacco Institute occasionally publishes — that smokers run three times the risk of sudden cardiac arrest than non-smokers, that smokers run up to twenty-five times the risk of lung cancer, that smoking is the major contributor to emphysema, and that women who smoke during pregnancy run an increased risk of spontaneous abortion, stillbirth, and premature delivery. If people didn't smoke, the incidence of death and disease would be reduced.



MELVIN L. WULF *practices law in New York. He was legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union from 1962 to 1977.*

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When I was a smoker, I knew I would be better off not smoking. Most smokers I know today make the same concession, but say they can't break the habit. There are some smokers who defend their habit on the ground that they enjoy it. Bless them. I would be the last man in the world to deprive them of their pleasure. But we should try to prevent or at least discourage non-smokers, especially teenagers, from taking up the dangerous habit. The best way to do that is to prohibit all tobacco advertising.

In making decisions to encourage or discourage certain activities, we compare benefits to cost. The cost of smoking is illness and death. Its benefits — apart from profits for the tobacco and advertising industries — are ephemeral and insignificant. Notwithstanding what addicts and The Tobacco Institute tell us, smoking has no redeeming features. I know because I smoked for thirty years until I was able to kick the habit twelve years ago.

You hear the argument that if cigarettes kill, so do cars. Why not prohibit automobile advertising? Because there is general consensus that the benefits of the automobile are so significant — for pleasure or for transportation — that the costs suffered by society, including deaths and injuries, do not justify a national campaign to discourage use of the automobile. In Manhattan and parts of Los Angeles perhaps, but not as a general principle.

Given the case against tobacco use, I believe that a total ban against tobacco advertising does not violate any First Amendment principle, and that it would be upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States.

My constitutional case begins by drawing distinctions. On one hand we have literal speech, oral and printed, which is used to express ideas, to argue political beliefs, to debate cultural values, to present the news, to gossip, to communicate; on the other hand, speech which is expressed symbolically as in the plastic arts, poetry, and literature, and all the other artistic forms, including films and plays. It isn't easy to define the full scope of human activity which I intend to include in this category, but it is what we would by consensus refer to as all endeavors related to art, science, culture, social organization, and politics, the ways in which humanity attempts to express and define itself. It includes the activities which are properly to be protected by the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech and free press.

In contrast is the area of expression denoted as "commercial speech." I put it in quotations because it is a phrase which has acquired the status in law of a term for art with a precise definition. It is speech whose purpose is to do "no more than propose a commercial transaction," as defined in various Supreme Court decisions.

In my judgment, commercial speech is of a different order from speech which is entitled to the fullest protection of the First Amendment and should not be treated as equal to speech which is ideational and humanly expressive. Selling a beer, a refrigerator, or a cigarette is qualitatively different from expressive activity which is "selling" political, artistic, cultural, and social opinions and beliefs. Selling products does not possess the qualities of "self-expression, self-realization, and self-fulfillment," as the Supreme Court puts it, that are inherent in non-commercial speech.

There is also the difference that the power of government to regulate economic activity (including commercial speech) is virtually exhaustive. As long as there is some rational relationship between the government's economic objective and the means taken to achieve it, the courts will not now presume to interfere. That issue was resolved fifty years ago during the New Deal era, when the Supreme Court conceded — under threat by Roosevelt to "pack" the Court with justices of a different persuasion — that the power to regulate economic activity belonged to the legislature, not the judiciary.

Commercial speech is generally uttered on behalf of corporations, i.e., artificial creatures of the state which acquire unusual powers and privileges, including the quite special right of limited financial liability. They are not the "natural persons" that the First Amendment is intended to protect. Also, being organized solely for the purpose of making money, they acquire a disproportionate power because of their financial resources, which can be and has been used to dominate portions of public life. These special aspects of the nature of corporations make them subject to broad regulation and control.

The distinctions between commercial and non-commercial speech are so obvious and significant, that even among those who believe that commercial speech should be protected by the Constitution, there is general agreement that the First Amendment is not to be applied to commercial speech with the same rigor as to non-commercial speech.

The ACLU concedes the different treatment of commercial speech. Its official statement of policy allows government regulation of commercial advertising which involves fraud, deception and misrepresentation, regulation of the financial and securities markets, advertising of forbidden products and activities, and unenumerated threats to public health and safety. Having conceded all of that, however, the ACLU opposes proposals to prohibit tobacco advertising. In Congressional testimony last summer, the ACLU's central argument was:

> It is not enough to assert that health would improve if persons stopped using tobacco. The Congress would need to build a credible case that banning the advertisements would improve public health. This premise of the tobacco ad-ban advocates is in substantial doubt. The evidence to date that tobacco advertising in fact is a substantial reason why persons begin to smoke, or continue to smoke once they start, is largely unpersuasive.

That is the ACLU's fundamental mistake. It totally ignores the extent of damage done to the public, and demands scientific proof that advertising makes people smoke. That must surely have amused the marketing geniuses on Madison Avenue, who seduce us with promises of romance and cattle

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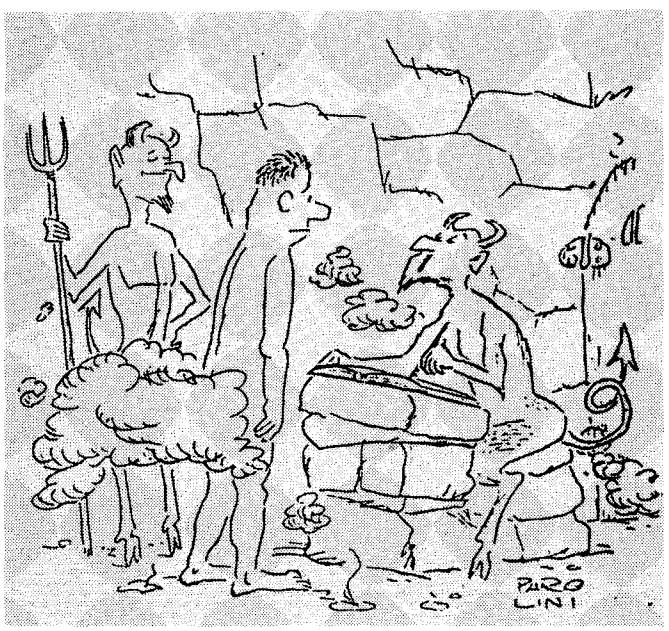
round-ups, and then abandon us to addiction. You bet advertising works. Together with some adolescent peer pressure and addiction, it is a major reason people smoke.

If Congress passes legislation to bar tobacco advertising, as it should, would it be held constitutional by the Supreme Court against a First Amendment challenge? I think so. Because while classic free speech cannot be suppressed in the absence of clear and present danger, a compelling state interest — or one or another such judicial formulation which imposes a very heavy burden on the party seeking suppression — commercial speech can be regulated. It can even be suppressed, if there is a reasonable relationship between the condition believed to require regulation and the particular form of regulation adopted to achieve the desired result. Indeed, a complete ban on cigarette advertising on radio and television was upheld by the courts against a First Amendment challenge fifteen years ago. And despite some different constitutional considerations which must be taken into account where the electronic media are concerned, the refusal of the Supreme Court even to review the lower court decision is a strong sign of what its attitude will be towards a universal ban.

In its major 1980 commercial speech case, *Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corp. v. Public Service Commission,* the Supreme Court held that regulation of commercial speech will be upheld if "the regulation directly advances the governmental interest asserted, and . . . is not more extensive than is necessary to serve that interest." A statutory prohibition by Congress of tobacco advertising will pass the test. The Court will not doubt the government interest in protecting the public health, for the data are overwhelming. And if it has any reservations about the utility of a total advertising ban, a majority of today's members of the Court will not question the judgment of the Congress that a ban on tobacco advertising is a rational way to discourage smoking.



"Smoking or non-smoking?"

The major constitutional question affecting television and radio is the extent to which the First Amendment applies to broadcasters.

Where newspapers, magazines, and books are concerned, the First Amendment is an inflexible shield against government action. Whoever has the resources to start a newspaper or a magazine, or to publish books (or produce films or plays), has complete freedom to decide what to publish. The right is both positive and negative. The owner or editor decides what is to go in or stay out, and the government can neither require that anything be printed nor forbid the printing of anything. The one major effort this century to censor the press, by enjoining publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1972, was beaten off by the courts, though some room was left for another attempt at another time in other circumstances. Neither can the government regulate the contents of the advertising space of print media, with one minor exception. In 1973 the Supreme Court upheld a state statute forbidding newspapers from publishing employment ads which invite racial, sexual, or religious discrimination. Though the prohibition flew directly in the face of the absolute protection of the print media by the First Amendment, the Court upheld the law on the ground that such advertisements were *merely* commercial speech, which was not then protected by the First Amendment.

Though the courts hold that radio and television are protected by the same First Amendment as the print media, they are treated very differently. Whereas government is barred from interfering with the print media, the law allows government to interfere every day with the news and editorial judgments of broadcasters. The fairness doctrine requires broadcasters to include public issues programs and to give fair coverage to both sides of such issues. If a television station broadcasts a program opposing the death penalty, proponents must be given time to reply — not equal time, just some time. If an individual involved in a public issue is personally attacked, he or she must be notified of the attack and offered an opportunity to reply.

The Supreme Court held the fairness doctrine constitutional in 1969 against a First Amendment challenge by broadcasters. The difference in treatment between print and electronic media, said the Court, lies in their technological differences. While anyone with the financial means can publish a newspaper or a magazine, financial means is not the only factor involved in establishing a radio or television station. The number of stations is inherently limited by the nature of the electronic spectrum. Only so many stations may occupy the spectrum, and the government, quite properly, exercises the power to allot the available slots to multiple applicants. Congress gave that power to the Federal Communications Commission fifty years ago. Having the right to exercise that power, the Congress and the FCC, says the Court, also have the right to impose conditions on successful applicants. One could quarrel with that basic principle on the ground that, once applicants are authorized by the FCC to broadcast, they should have precisely the same First Amendment protection as their

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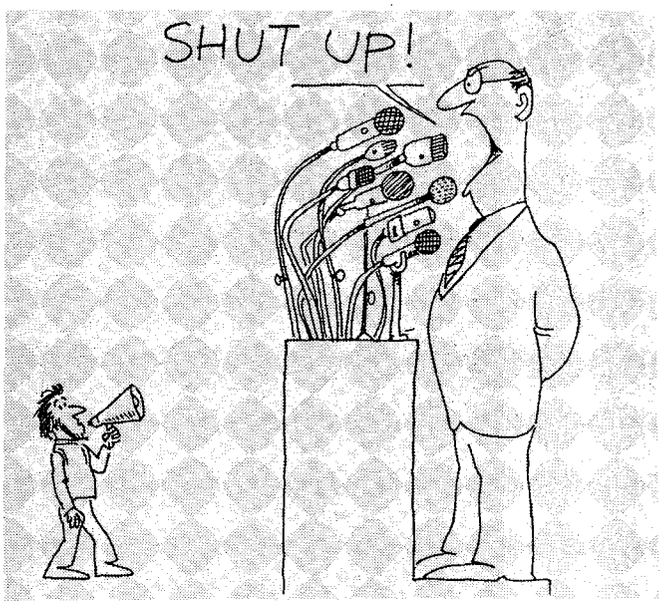

colleagues in the newspaper business. Radio and television broadcasters are certainly part of the "press" explicitly protected by the First Amendment, and a strong doctrinal case could be made for similar treatment. I don't want to take up that quarrel today, however, because I would lose it. The law is too fixed in accepting differential treatment. My purpose is to keep the social purposes of the First Amendment in mind while quarreling with the fairness doctrine.

I oppose the fairness doctrine because I believe that, no matter the technological distinction between print and electronics, the First Amendment has been such a success in providing the nation with an abundant and diverse press, it should be given a chance to work its inherent genius upon the electronic media also.

The purpose of the fairness doctrine is to attempt to make broadcasters civicly responsible by requiring them to devote time to public affairs. The theory is that because of their enormous financial success, radio and television broadcasters would much prefer to spend all their broadcasting hours on the kind of programs which attract maximum commercial interest, and maximum revenue. By and large, that is what they do. On the other hand, we do have some good theater, domestic and imported; and we do have lots of sports programming. And that doesn't even take into account the programming of cable television, which has expanded the menu exponentially.

What programming is it for which we can thank the fairness doctrine? What programming do we expect it to deliver? I suppose what we want are more frequent public affairs programs which stimulate the audience to think about social and political problems, and which increase and raise the level of political discourse across the whole spectrum of public affairs.

The question is whether we should thank the fairness doctrine for what little public affairs programming we now get on television or whether we would get more without it. The only way to find out is for Congress to suspend the fairness doctrine for a period of time, five years perhaps, and see what happens. I think we may be surprised. I think we should give television and radio the same chance to be free that we have given, with great success, to the print media. I think that it is possible — not certain, just possible — that the industry might arise to the occasion.

Under the present system, one cannot say that television is a serious medium of communication. If we want serious communication, we read books and a few journals and newspapers. But television is enormously influential and enormously bland, centrist, and non-committal. Its influence is frightening, and I dare not even guess where it will take us. Perhaps the world will eventually be populated with zombies under the total domination of whoever gains control of the television system. Maybe we already are and don't know it.

The power of television is one argument for government regulation. If television is to broadcast controversial programs, must we not protect ourselves by requiring presentation of each side of the controversy so that we can theoretically make up our own minds, rather than be seduced by the tube's hypnotic, one-sided presentation? I think the same fear was expressed when Gutenberg built his printing press. Some societies still entertain this fear and refuse to run the risk of a free press.

On the other side is the argument for the First Amendment. Give television and radio broadcasters the same freedom as their print colleagues and see what happens. It may be true, as broadcasters claim, that the burden of presenting competing sides of a controversial issue discourages presentation of all controversial issues. And it just may be that, if liberated from that yoke, broadcasters will become more adventurous, more like their print colleagues, than they are now. We won't know unless we give them the chance.

The other major issue involving broadcasting and the First Amendment is whether broadcasters should be required by law to sell time for controversial advertising, either commercial or ideational. Under present law, they need not do so. There is pressure being applied to change that rule, led by Mobil Oil's campaign conducted in the newspapers because broadcasters won't run Mobil's editorial ads.

In my judgment, the law should not be changed. Broadcasters, like newspapers, should continue to have the right freely to accept or reject whatever advertisements are offered to them. Which is not to say that broadcasters should reject Mobil's editorial advertisements, or others with which they disagree or which they believe are too controversial. To the contrary, they should accept the advertisements as part of their public responsibility. By and large, newspapers of general circulation accept that responsibility. They understand that the freedoms protected by the First Amendment are meaningless unless they are exercised. Broadcasters should accept the same responsibility. They do not because revenue is more important to them than high standards or journalism. They fear that controversy will cost them money. Ah well, maybe it will, but they make enough to be able to afford it.

I must add that the ethical duty to accept controversial advertisements has limits. I do not believe that newspapers,

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journals, or broadcasters with a specialized mission have a duty to accept advertisements which they find objectionable. Catholic journals have no duty to accept Planned Parenthood ads, black newspapers have no duty to accept KKK ads, and Jewish journals needn't accept ads favorable to the PLO. It is wrong to force ideology down anyone's throat. But the television networks and newspapers of general circulation should be thought of as First Amendment common carriers. Whoever can afford to buy space or time should be allowed to. The spirit of the First Amendment demands it.

You may ask how I can reconcile my reservations about the timidity of television executives who are afraid to run controversial ads, with my optimistic view that, if freed from the fairness doctrine, they will suddenly become courageous journalists. Good question. My best answer is that I like to think that the First Amendment is something of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Its beneficiaries may learn that being protected by a principle is only partially satisfactory — that full constitutional satisfaction requires exercise of rights across the spectrum. It's a bit optimistic, but so is the First Amendment.

THE EMIGRATION OF INNOCENTS

QUESTIONS & CONFLICTS IN ADOPTION

CYNTHIA J. CARNEY

Today, the presence of a mixed-race family strolling through the neighborhood shopping mall may draw curious stares and a few comments, but it's no longer the rarity it once was. As the number of adoptable, healthy white infants decreases in the United States, thousands of North Americans are opting to welcome a child from another country into their homes — a phenomenon that is straining the delicate mechanisms that have grown helter-skelter to handle intercountry adoption.

The casual observer may view intercountry adoption — here I will restrict my observations to adoption of Central and South American children — as a productive exchange between one country with too many starving and homeless children and another country with too many barren women. In the last twenty years, the numbers of orphan immigrants arriving from Central and South America has increased by more than 5,000 percent — from 43 in 1965 to 2,260 in 1985. But this complex and burgeoning business of intercountry adoption should not be viewed in the cold, one-dimensional context of a commodity exchange between one country and another. Especially today, intercountry adoption is carried out in a crossfire of complex political, economic, social, and cultural forces that affect relations between the United States and Central and South America. The results include a growing number of more restrictive rules and regulations. Here are a few examples:

- In the streets of Brasilia in early 1986, citizens marched in protest against North Americans adopting their children.
- In Colombia, an orphanage's adoption activities were closed temporarily last fall by the courts when a North American couple lodged a complaint against officials.
- In 1985, federal investigators uncovered an Arizona-based ring which falsely promised to provide more than forty couples with children from Mexico.
- In December 1986, the *Los Angeles Times* reported in depth about a "baby scam" involving American citizens who were arranging adoptions through unscrupulous attorneys in El Salvador.

Despite the scandals and risks of adopting from abroad, the number of orphan immigrants arriving in the U.S. from Central and South America continues to rise. The reasons are clear. It is estimated that more than 2 million North American couples are unwilling to wait three to five years to adopt a healthy infant born in the U.S. The National Committee for Adoption, a private group funded by individuals and private adoption agencies, estimates about 50,000 adoptions of U.S. children a year, of whom only about 20,000 are healthy infants. According to Jeff Rosenberg, director of public policy for the committee, another 36,000 U.S. children are legally free and waiting to be adopted, but may be "less desirable" for adoption because they are older, part of sibling groups, or are disabled. Forty percent of these waiting children are black. They are more likely to be in foster care longer because many public agencies will not place black children with white couples.

As a result of North Americans trying to adopt from Central and South America, the dishonest practices that have occurred in a number of countries, and a growing anti-U.S. sentiment in some of these countries, many Central and South American governments have applied the brakes to intercountry adoption to reexamine their policies and determine how best to prevent

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abuses. Some orphanages are requiring new regulations, such as a three-month waiting period after a baby is born to give the birth mother a chance to change her mind and keep her baby. Restrictions on the adopting couple can include age, religion, and marital status. One orphanage in Colombia accepts applications only from Catholic couples who have been married at least four years, who have never been divorced, whose average age does not exceed thirty-five, and who have completed a Marriage Encounter. Other orphanages and agencies are excluding singles from adoption.

Many U.S. citizens, especially those who don't fit into the stereotypical role of the young married couple active in a church or synagogue whose wife is willing to stay home with the baby, may resent measures that make it more difficult and more expensive to find the right "source" from which to adopt. They protest that their motivation for adoption is simply to love and care for a child of their own.

Yet, sincerity of motivation and purity of heart do not make for a successful adoption. While a North American may be anxious to launch into the next stage of his or her life passage — raising a family — the country of origin is struggling to make sure that its children are not being stolen off the streets by unscrupulous attorneys eager to cash in on wealthy North American couples. The clumsy system of intercountry adoption that once worked for a few is straining under the weight of the increasing numbers of North Americans who want babies. No government agency in the United States has sole responsibility or authority for supervising adoptions. The same holds true for most countries in Central and South America. Adoption is a private business, conducted through attorneys and agencies, and remains virtually unregulated.

Political factors also weigh heavily in the current scene of intercountry adoption. Adoption by North American couples is seen by many as yet another wound to the pride of countries that feel themselves exploited economically and politically by the United States. Many countries view North Americans as wealthy and haughty, and resent the emigration of their children to a country whose people they perceive as culturally, religiously, and morally impoverished. These attitudes toward the United States are a huge stumbling block for officials who must wrestle with foreign officials daily in the complex search for legally adoptable children.

"Here, in the developed countries, we may look at intercountry adoption as a way to solve overpopulation," says the Reverend Robert J. Vitillo, chief of service for Europe and North America for Caritas International. "But it's not as simple as that. We can't just look at statistics and say they [Central and South American countries] have too many children, so we'll take some. The people over there ask, 'Why do you want to take our children away?' Many view it as just another form of American imperialism."

Yet another cultural gap that affects intercountry adoption is the two regions' different views of children. Many North Americans believe they are doing their neighbors a "favor" by adopting their homeless children. On the contrary, the countries of origin are watching in horror as their children slip away by the hundreds. In underdeveloped countries, children are a source of pride, a key to the future, a treasure to parents who may have nothing else in their lives. The exodus of their children to another country is a searing mark upon these nations' souls, a sign that they are incapable of caring for their own children.

Not only are these countries loath to let go so many children, they are concerned about their children's future in an Ameri-

Catholic Charities builds a bridge

Catholic Charities USA is now taking steps to provide a network of information for more than forty of its agencies who place children from Central and South America. The newly-formed National Office for International Child Care and Placement is being established jointly with the migration and refugee services of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C.

The office is envisioned as providing referrals to participating Catholic Charities chapters. According to Rosemary Winder Strange, director of social services at Catholic Charities USA, it will also offer training in intercountry adoption issues. But Raul Hernandez, M.D., who has been hired to establish the office, stresses that the office is not simply an adoption program. "We see this office as a chance to build a bridge between the U.S. church and the church in Latin America. We want to make contacts with church and government officials to see how we can best help them create programs to help their children. So this shouldn't be addressed as only an adoption program, but as a program that will help the country's children in the best way for the particular country." Hernandez expects to take his first trip to Central America in March or April.

Reverend Robert J. Vitillo of Caritas International and Sister Mary Bartholomew, MSBT, of the Catholic Social Services of Philadelphia paved the way for Hernandez when they went on a fact-finding mission in January 1986 to Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, and Chile.

"We know we want to get involved in this issue because we want to clean up the kinds of problems that have been occurring in intercountry adoption," says Msgr. Nicholas Dimarzio, director of migration and refugee services. "The welfare of the children is our biggest concern, whether they are helped by staying in their country or by being placed with a family in the U.S."

C.J.C.

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can family whose societal values are so vastly different from their own. In large part as a result of television, the typical North American is perceived as materialistic, practicing abortion and birth control, and without a strong religious heritage. One foreign official told an adoption supervisor that he doesn't feel it's necessary for his country to provide children to women who marry late in life, who practice birth control or abortion, and who put career before family. "They blew it," said the official. "Why should we send them our children?"

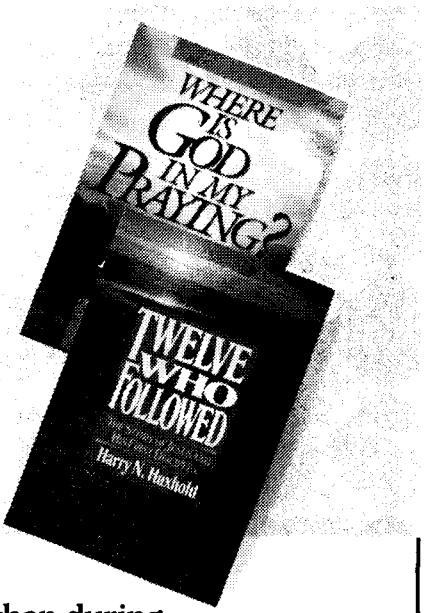
Yet a number of persistent North Americans remain undaunted by the cultural problems and the paperwork, and can sometimes adopt a child from Central or South America in twelve to eighteen months.

The journey begins with time-consuming and arduous paperwork which must ultimately be certified by the foreign country, requires an exhaustive home study by a social worker, and usually ends with a trip (lasting from one week to several months) to pick up the child from the country of birth. At any step of the way, the adoptive parents can be informed that the child has suddenly become unavailable, that new expenses have been incurred, or that more paperwork is required. By the end of the process, many expectant couples have spent between $6,500 and $10,000 — and sometimes up to $20,000.

Is there a means of systematizing intercountry adoption which will protect the rights of the child, and at the same time streamline the process while ensuring some security for the adoptive parents? Members of a task force on intercountry adoption set up by Catholic Charities USA were concerned with unethical behavior affecting adoptions through local chapters. In January 1986 they sent a team to South America to gather information from government and orphanage officials (see sidebar, page 80).

On a personal level, however, how can an individual U.S. citizen help to better relations in a process that Vitillo describes as "risky and haphazard at best, and corrupt and abusive at worst"? Many North American couples have returned from countries in South or Central America with hopes for lasting friendships with officials and orphanage directors who were helpful and warm throughout the adoption process. Many of these individuals have joined parent support groups, such as LAPA (Latin American Parents Association) and FACE (Families Adopting Children Everywhere). These organizations provide a structure in which parents can cope with societal attitudes toward mixed-race families, can preserve their children's heritage, and can help the children deal with their adoptive status and their different color as they grow older. These organizations also investigate the reputability of attorneys, sponsor workshops on adoption options, and work to pass legislation that will streamline the adoption process.

Still, it's not enough for the adopting couple to whisk a



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starving waif away from a country and resume their comfortable lives oblivious to the child's country of origin. Many Central and South American officials express anger that, as put by Vitillo, "the Americans take away one child for themselves and give that child all the opportunities, but forget the many who are left behind and have nothing." One board member of the Maryland Regional Chapter of LAPA said that the tone of an orphanage director in Colombia changed from evasion to surprised thrill when she realized an adoptive parent was contacting her only to ask if LAPA could donate on a regular basis. Another couple, who adopted a child from Nicaragua, regularly visits the orphanage in Managua where their daughter was born to bring medical supplies and needed donations. Perhaps more and more North Americans, through their experiences of intercountry adoption, will recognize and accept their responsibility to help not just the child who is now part of their own family, but the other needy children who are part of the world's family.

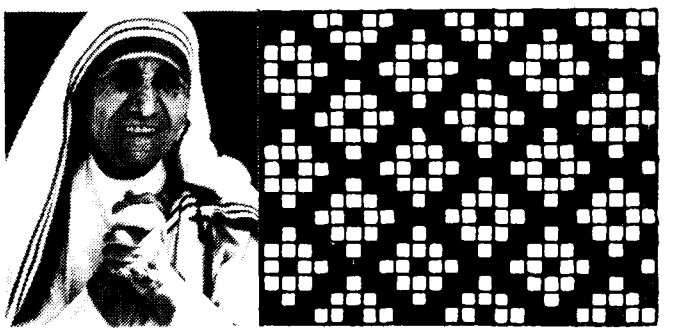
SCREEN

HEROIC & MOCK-HEROIC

'VILLAGE,' 'MOTHER TERESA,' & 'DUET'

The setting of *My Sweet Little Village* is a Czechoslovakian small town on the cusp of modernization. Jiri Menzel (who directed the 1968 "Prague Spring" film, *Closely Watched Trains*) offers a gently ironic, affectionate look at the value of outdated rural ways. His obvious concern is not the battle between East and West but between tradition and modernity.

The story centers on Otik, a grown orphan and village simpleton (Janos Ban), and the work partner he unintentionally but consistently sabotages, a truckdriver named Pavek (Marian Labuda). Their misadventures frame other village stories, mainly soap-opera love triangles involving jealous macho husbands, pretty wives, and handsome visiting scholars. For the most part, Menzel is able to sustain this structureless structure, but at times (especially halfway through) he seems to be telling one story too many and repeating a few jokes too frequently.



Nevertheless, Menzel keeps his balance, not just by returning to Otik and Pavek, but through the presence of a crusty, kindly old country doctor Skruzny (Rudolf Hrusinsky). Skruzny, like the film, is part formula, and reminded me of "Doc" on *Gunsmoke*, the wise codger who knows everyone's secrets and tells none. But he is also an original, especially in his rambling poeticizing as he drives at leisure through the rolling Bohemian countryside, reminiscing about Czechoslovakia's past grandeur. It is Menzel's finest piece of mock-heroic.

The director's style is deliberately rural. His pacing invites us to sit back on a porch and have a beer in backwoods Bohemia, a place, he implies, that even modern urban Czechs have come to think of as "the old country." People still raise rabbits and pigeons there; church steeples and roofs are round and graceful, a stark contrast to the squares and cubes of the city—especially the drab urban apartment complex that Otik might move to if Pavek sticks to his threat to get rid of him. A few terse shots reveal the city invading the country. Two Czech yuppies with a summer home in the village jog about or perform frenzied yard aerobics while their puzzled neighbors continue their rounds in the slow walk of the centuries.

All the villagers feel the attractions of progress (especially in omnipresent television), but the central story involves its ultimate rejection. Janos Ban, a Hungarian, plays the moron Otik perfectly, both compelling our sympathy and repelling our taste, thereby attaining just the right amount—and no more—of comic sentiment. Marian Labuda is even better as the gruff teamster with a heart of gold. He can't stand Otik's clumsiness, but relents on his threats when he sees that Otik's village home might be bought as yet another summer house by an urban bureaucrat.

Large political issues are left tantalizingly unresolved in *My Sweet Little Village*. Menzel is right to focus on modernization and the heartless landscapes produced by urban developers under socialism or capitalism. Perhaps he says as much as he can or wants to in the "Gorbachev spring" of the past two years. Menzel implies, at the least, that socialist managers are as capable of all the sins of progress that Westerners are. But in truth, he might have pointed to events like Chernobyl as examples rather than blaming Prague's spoiled tastes on West Germany.

Mother Teresa, both a theatrical and public television release at Christmas, is innocent of any ideology. The style of this documentary is as simple, direct, and substantial as its subject. Two New York women, Mary and Jeanette Petrie, directed and produced the film, wisely letting its subject and her work speak for themselves.

They have also structured perfectly its eighty minutes, dividing it equally between a survey of Mother Teresa's life and of the many missions where her nuns have set up houses of mercy, not just in her adopted home, Calcutta, but in the South Bronx, Guatemala, and other trouble spots. The film thereby provides a constant sense of connection between personal

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biography and public achievement, between past and present.

The best scenes occur in Beirut. During a cease-fire, Mother Teresa went to the aid of abandoned spastic children. Chilling minutes in the children's hospital bring one face to face with what it means to perform such work. Evident throughout is a fierce determination to ease the suffering of the poor and share their burden. In San Francisco, giving back some generous gifts for her new mission, Mother Teresa declares, "For us to understand the poor, we have to experience poverty." She also instructs her nuns to take literally Christ's words on the lilies of the field, and emphasizes her own reliance on providence.

Theologically and politically, it might be easy to carp at some of these statements. Mother Teresa makes just one reference to the cause of the problem she ministers to with such devotion: "Poverty is not created by God but by human beings; we are responsible because we don't share." Sometimes one hungers for more, at least some reference by the documentary-makers to the tradition of Catholic social teaching. On the other hand, attempts to plan and administer mass corporal and spiritual works of mercy have often failed dismally because they lack the simple loving care for human beings illustrated so well here.

One technical weakness harms the film. Often other speakers (besides Mother Teresa) are unidentified, even when on camera. You have to piece together who they are. But this is a minor problem. Watching the documentary, one is impressed even visually by Mother Teresa's sari habit, with its blue striped border, and the way it seems to illustrate the simple but joyous attitude of her sisters. As she continually instructs novices, a smile can be the ultimate work of mercy. Cheerfulness is here reclaimed from "have a nice day" and returned to the realm of holy spirit.

Duet for One is an offkey caper that only fitfully hits the right notes. Its premise is fraught with the danger of melodrama: Julie Andrews plays a gifted violinist suddenly crippled by multiple sclerosis. Playwright/screenwriter Tom Kempinski and director Andrei Konchalovsky thus tackle the unenviable task of renewing the wellworn "handicapped faces the world" genre.

Their success is mixed. Andrews makes her conflict of resolve and despair convincing, especially in scenes where she quickly shifts from Mary Poppins cheer to anguished, angry acknowledgment of her state. Alas, most of these scenes involve two male leads whose roles and performances seem flabby. Max von Sydow plays a fidgety psychoanalyst whose non-treatment even a psychotic would flee, but the screenplay demands that Andrews fall in love with him. Such a move is made easier by the infidelity of her drunken, avant-garde composer husband, played with an all-too-credible alcoholic stupor by Alan Bates. A key fight scene between them doesn't come across as a dramatically explosive revelation of contradictory feelings about her illness, but as an incoherent hash of all their previous marital problems.

Less central male figures fortunately evade caricature and sometimes match Andrews's fire. An old pianist named Leonid (Sigfrit Steiner) is magnificently indifferent until the screenplay makes him mouth some stupidly reassuring lines. A junkman serves as a kind of Lady Chatterley's lover (between husband and shrink), but Liam Neeson (also in *The Mission*) raises the role above type. Rupert Everett shines as Andrews's brazen young violin student, not above cashing in his classical training for a year of good money. Like Tom Hulce in *Amadeus* (really, all things considered, a whitewash of the real Mozart), Everett provides a genuine if shocking portrait of the young virtuoso as a vulgarian.

The film's depiction of the musical world encapsulates both its strengths and flaws. Konchalovsky supplies Andrews with a musical past by resorting to some needless properties—posters, record albums, and *Zelig*-like photos of Andrews with greats of the musical world. But he also photographs tremendous shots of Andrews watching her fingers betray her as she rehearses, and an even better sequence as she and Everett trek labyrinths beneath Albert Hall before a concert. Excellent mobile camerawork catches both the glamour and danger of a performance that Andrews looks toward with excitement and dread. I wish that the movie had stopped there.

TOM O'BRIEN

STAGE

DOUBLE JEOPARDY

GURNEY'S 'SWEET SUE'

Ever since the success of *The Dining Room* in 1982, A. R. Gurney, Jr. has been circling Broadway, coming closer and closer to the showcase that once was the goal of every aspiring dramatist. Gurney has been at it for thirty years and has built a solid reputation as a playwright without the Broadway imprimatur. Those of us who have long admired his work (I first came across Gurney when I read *The Golden Fleece* in 1972) wished him well as he moved out to a wider audience. However, now that he has finally come to Broadway with *Sweet Sue* and two bonafide media stars — Mary Tyler Moore and Lynn Redgrave — the result is disappointing.

Gurney's milieu is the comfortable WASP middle class, and his perception is of a society in decline, perhaps happily so. Although he can be overtly preachy, as he was in last season's *The Perfect Party*, he generally allows the social theme to emerge from his comedy. Perhaps to forestall the possibility that his work may be taken as cousin to that of a joking moralist like Jean Kerr, Gurney has used a variety of devices to subvert the straightforward development of conventional comedy. *The Middle Ages* takes place in the trophy room of a men's club over a period of thirty years, and the more ambitious *The Dining Room* lets a group of actors move from one family of characters to another as the titular room chronicles the changes

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in society. The device in *Sweet Sue* is to allow four actors to play two characters. The two Susans talk to one another, sometimes amiably, sometimes peevishly. In the scenes with Jake, one Susan picks up the other's words, often in mid-sentence, and goes on with the scene only to step aside in her turn. So it is with the two Jakes. For the most part, the gimmick aside, the scenes are to be taken as actual encounters, but Susan is also given to fantasy so that occasionally the Susans and the Jakes act out a might-have-been scene, usually one involving Jake's posing in the nude. As a further complication, one or the other of the Susans speaks to herself in a monologue or to the audience in direct address.

There are moments in *Sweet Sue* in which one of the Susans appears more maternal, the other more seductive; one more professional, the other more personal. Similarly, one of the Jakes sometimes seems more sensitive and romantic, the other more direct and carnal. Yet, there is no consistency in the presentation, no serious attempt to suggest that the doubling represents separate and conflicting aspects of the characters. Perhaps Gurney simply wants to avoid the kind of good angel-bad angel division that Bil Keane now and then uses in his cartoon, "Family Circus," and to suggest that human beings are more complex than neat definitions imply. Beyond that, there is doubt about what course of behavior is good or bad, correct or incorrect within the context of the play itself.

Sweet Sue is about a summer when a woman of uncertain age (late forties, early fifties) does or does not sleep with her son's college roommate, who has come to spend the vacation as a guest in her house and a partner to her son in a house-painting venture. The son conveniently stays offstage — as gratuitous a device as Gurney has ever contrived — so that the woman and the son's friend can interact, as undergraduates like to say these days. Susan, whose husband understandably deserted her (even she says that), has brushed off her art-school skills and made a living as an illustrator of button-cute Hallmark cards; she has raised three children, the last of whom, the son, is about to go out on his own. At this moment, she would like to do something serious as an artist, paint a believable tree (or a nude), and as a woman, find a love more intense than the tepid companionship of the two nice boring men we never see. Jake, a victim of the new sexual freedom, wants a relationship with a woman that is not simply physical, but intellectual and spiritual as well. This is a set-up for a replenishing summer romance from which both characters return, their confidence restored, their sense of self strengthened. I confess I do not know whether or not they ever get together. As Jake leaves at the end, Susan follows him, offering him a beer and an invitation to stay and talk. Susan Two then tells the audience how they fell into one another's arms, how they met here, there, elsewhere — including one chilly walk during which Jake bought her a plum-colored sweater — and finally how they agreed to part. Susan comes back on stage, wearing the plum-colored sweater but saying that Jake refused to stay for the beer, thus leaving the audience with an ambiguous explanation for the wryly upbeat final scene between the two Susans.

I further confess that I do not care whether or not Susan and Jake ever get together. They are two of the dullest people ever to come down the pike. Gurney, who has been teaching literature for twenty-five years, has to know that references to *Anna Karenina,* opera, and the Talking Heads do not indicate that the speakers are interesting or witty. Jake is a whiner of sorts, and Susan is given to mean-spirited one-liners which presumably mask her distress, but actually underline her shallowness. Nor are they particularly charming. The coldness in the characters is partly a product of the device that splits them in two, but the playing — particularly of the Susans — does not help. Both Moore and Redgrave are accomplished comedians, but in *Sweet Sue* they display the mannerisms that television has made familiar, with even a sit-com-deep character, to suggest substance behind the gestures. The result is unnervingly arch. I cannot believe that Gurney intended the characters as I perceive them, but if he did, I presume he is suggesting that both the 1950s, which formed Susan, and the 1980s, which formed Jake, are forcing ground for hollow men. A sensible social point, just the kind that Gurney might well make, but *Sweet Sue* finally comes across like one of Susan's greeting cards, more cute than acute.

GERALD WEALES

Marie Ponsot

Reminder

I am rich, I am poor. Time is all I own,
& I eat or spit it as experience.
By the bitten wound the biting tooth is known.

Thrift is a venomous error, then, a stone
named soup or bread I mouth to keep up the pretense
that I'm rich. I am poor; time is all I own

though hungry memory shouts that Time shone
once, way back, through you: filled full; fulfilled,
immense.
By the bitten wound the biting tooth is known,

though scars fade. Memories I can't disown
evaporate anyway; though it be dense
& I am rich, I am poor. Time is all I own;

it feeds me, my perennial skeleton
structuring the flesh of my moving suspense
by whose bitten wounds the biting tooth is known.

A whole skin's one state in a suite of events.
If its past is long its future's short. Since
I am rich I am poor. Time is all I own.
By the bitten wound the biting tooth is known.

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Leaving the Hound at bay

FAITH, SEX, MYSTERY
Richard Gilman
Simon and Schuster
$16.95, 253 pp.

Paul Baumann

When the twenty-seven-year-old newly baptised Richard Joan (for Joan of Arc) Thomas (for Saint Thomas More) Gilman arrived in New Orleans in 1954, the city, although not exactly a boiling cauldron of lusts, was steamy enough to scald his thin spiritual hide. Like the patron saint of all autobiographers (in a line he quotes more than once), he chose chastity, but later. Illicit sexual "impulses," idosyncratic attitudes, would drive this convert out the church doors and into the open arms of the literati a scant six years hence.

Not that he is happy about any of it.

Richard Gilman, child of Brooklyn's Flatbush, distinguished drama and literary critic, (drama critic first at *Commonweal*, then *Newsweek*, more recently *The Nation*), professor of drama at Yale University, former president of PEN, winner of awards and grants worth coveting, has a confession to make. He once was a Catholic. (He never told his Jewish parents.) Worse, he misses it.

Faith, Sex, Mystery: A Memoir is the story of Gilman's conversion, apostasy, and "present existence in a realm of abstract, remembered spirituality." That is a rarefied realm, to be sure, and if these revelations don't make for inspirational reading, this work can still impress with its remarkable candor, sensitivity, and erudition. Indeed, if Mr. Gilman were a less generous and tolerant man — with himself as well as with others — he might have written a better, more original, book.

As it is, Gilman offers us an oddly importuning piece of writing. He attempts to woo the reader with therapeutic frankness, addressing us directly, and often imploringly. The voice that emerges is at once self-assured and more than a little self-regarding.

Gilman's passionate infatuation with Catholicism began, appropriately enough, not in a church but a library — a branch of the New York Public Library to be exact. There he encounters the Amityville Horror edition of Etienne Gilson's *Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*. And we mean Spirit! The book literally takes possession of our casual browser and he is drawn unwillingly to the tome by a mysterious force, an experience he later comes to accept as divine intervention — perhaps the only force powerful enough to get anyone to pick up a text on medieval philosophy.

Efforts to physically discard the book are eerily frustrated. Reading it he is struck quite blind by the magisterial assuredness of Gilson's presentation. Intellectually he falls head over heels in love with Rome. (A romance any good Irish pastor would have warned him against.)

This "force" reappears on a number of occasions as Gilman, raised in an ethically homogeneous Jewish neighborhood, makes the culturally difficult move towards the Catholic church. "I didn't go to the church, it came to me," he insists. Perhaps. In any event, the Hound of heaven is evoked, and Gilman even professes to have learned the Hail Mary by a kind of osmosis.

These strange solicitations culminate in the appearance of Ruth, a somewhat prescient figure whose haunting spirituality is enhanced by her faded beauty. Ruth becomes Gilman's spiritual midwife, coaching him through an intense but finally successful labor. The author's feelings for her are still strong and demand respect. Still, Ruth's "I wanted to kiss a leper" ecstasies are a bit theatrical. (She is an apostate actress.) A "secular nun" is how Gilman describes her. But she seems entirely too otherworldly for any serious religious work, and in this she is emblematic of much of the "religion" and even "mystery" in Gilman's book.

Gilman, it hardly needs saying, is a gifted writer and a masterly exegete. Especially evocative is a lyrical passage on growing up in Brooklyn and his childhood impressions of Catholicism. He "had regarded as terrifying apparitions the nuns he would occasionally see going in and out of — scuttling in and out of — the Catholic church a few blocks away from his home . . . a church from which an endless procession of coffins seemed to emerge."

His portraits of the Manhattan clergy he abashedly confronts in the 1950s while trying to sell subscriptions to the Catholic journal *Jubilee* are vivid and agreeably pointed. Equally adept, and crucial to the book's ultimate purposes, is a sketch of a world-weary French priest who hears Gilman's confession, offers an acute diagnosis of his spiritual condition ("aridity"), and stuns our memoirist with some nearly heretical counsel.

But finally there is too much talk — and a kind of fussily nuanced talk at that — and not enough action in *Faith, Sex, Mystery*. The mannered air of the seminar room seeps in. Gilman takes great pains to emphasize the complexity of life and the ambiguities of human motivation, and that is fair enough. But it also encourages an oblique, lofty, and yet tentative style that is too often the way the author hedges his bets. And he knows it. In the concluding pages Gilman con-

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fesses, "I know I've been a rationalizer, a subtle schemer after a 'truth' about my actions that would keep my conscience disarmed. And I know that beneath those rationalizations I fell back into self-commiseration because the battle against carnality and ambition — which had come more and more to look like aspects of the same primary force, alarming, guilt-ridden — had become too much for me. In this retreat I had left God behind. I wasn't to be solicited anymore."

This is a teasingly self-effacing assessment, and typical of *Faith, Sex, Mystery* in its somewhat manipulative quality. Gilman is just a little too fond of admitting to a shortcoming.

The fact is: he moved towards the church during a period of great personal frustration and insecurity. He was in his late twenties, unemployed, struggling in an unhappy marriage and unable for the most part to write. Socially, professionally, and to some extent sexually (or at least he thought so at the time), his status was marginal, his sense of identity shaky. To some extent Gilman is frank about this, although he argues that his anomalous social situation and his precarious psychological condition were secondary to what he calls his spiritual experience.

That may be true. But is it just coincidence that those so-called manifestations of the spirit evaporate as his professional and personal confidence grows? After four years as associate editor of *Jubilee* (1955-1959), his ambition is to move towards the nonsectarian press. (Amusingly, he goes to *Commonweal*.) His dissatisfaction with the lack of a "real" career and his determination to forge new professional relationships parallel the rapid dissipation of his faith. By the time he moves to *Commonweal*, a magazine he feels has prestige outside the limiting world of religious journalism, he is no longer a practicing Catholic. "It [Catholicism] all seemed irrelevant," he says of religion's role in his advancing career. "I became largely secular." And by "secular" we understand that his devotion was transferred from a religious community to a succession of writing jobs.

This is hardly a unique evolution, and one can't help but wonder at Gilman's fretful reminiscence of it all. Understandably, he regrets that in leaving the church his life is now "set against nothing"; deprived of the promise of eternal salvation it lacks spiritual depth, even to a certain extent hope. But Gilman is unwilling to act on this regret; things are not that bad. Earthly perdition has its consolations. So if there's nothing intellectually or morally dishonest — and Gilman maintains there isn't — in the loss of his faith, why is it the source of such extravagant melancholy? He has been richly blessed with talent, success, children, and the affection of students and friends. Yet he claims to have forfeited some ineffable fulfillment. What — in this world — does he really expect from religion? Something, one suspects, he doesn't want to pay for.

That Gilman is convinced he was once the object of "His special concern" is perhaps the most puzzling aspect of this memoir. And in this light it is interesting to note that his hard-won faith, the product of much study and personal anguish, is nonetheless curiously heterodox. He confesses, for example, that he had "trouble from the beginning" with the sacramental nature of the Eucharist. He just didn't buy it, or to borrow his phrase, he unwillingly "swallowed" his doubts about transubstantiation along with the wafer. He wanted mystery, he says, "But in this case, as in some others, the mystery seemed too literal." He couldn't accept the idea that such mysteriousness was "confined to a physical fact."

This insensibility to sacrament leaves Gilman with a rather attenuated Catholicism, as though he might have insisted on reviewing plays only by reading them and never attending a performance. He can't help but see the bread and wine as "a concession," a kind of visual and tactile aid to belief. He wants mystery to take him beyond, to the next realm — and immediately. "For all my avowed respect for mystery it seems that I couldn't wait for its operations to take effect, didn't trust that it would happen. And I don't now," he finally admits.

Gilman rejects sacrament, one fears, because it is not arcane enough. Its accessibility — you don't have to ingest Gilson to worship at this table — taints it. But our ability to respond to such symbols, as the anthropologist Mary Douglas has argued, is largely determined by our social experience and the systems of accountability that govern our dealings with others. In those terms, the individualistic meritocracy of the dominant culture Gilman embraces leaves little room for sacramentality.

Beyond that, the mystery of the Eucharist is something that, as I understand it, we need not trust to happen; it has already happened on the cross. Moreover, we must live in, not travel through the sacrament. The Eucharist does not offer access to some other dimension of existence, but delivers us over truly to the existence we live now. In this sense it is a discipline as much as a gift, or perhaps the essence of the gift is the discipline. As the symbol of the thing, as well as the thing itself, the Eucharist is not "confined" by the bread and wine. Rather, as Alexander Schmemann has written, those elements of the sacrament are the perfect expression of the "reality of the symbol and the symbolism of reality." Real life, notes Schmemann, is eucharistic life. There isn't any other.

In the beginning of *Faith, Sex, Mystery*, Gilman outlines the problems of autobiography, and speaks of the necessity of finding a "shape" for his story. The risks he takes in pursuit of that goal are humbling. But the ultimate shape of this memoir is not a very surprising one — it preserves the glossy edges of an age whose spiritual sterility the author professes to disdain.

It could be said that Gilman had built the most modern of glass houses and then furnished it with the finest ecclesiastical antiques good taste and brains could find. The effect is at first striking, but soon the incongruity of the two ways of life becomes apparent. It is not a house you can live in. You can't nurture the spirit in a world that increasingly demands the walls of every sanctuary be torn down and replaced with the transparent advertisements of the self.

Gilman's final allegiance, like most of ours, is to the skeptical rationalism and

(Continued on page 88)

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POEMS
Joan Rohr Meyers

Apples

We've come again to apples,
when red-cheeked days
give off a seasoned cry
and time looks back
with mattered longing
to Being's burst.

Our breath grows white
among hard choices.

Remembering,
we take and eat
we take and eat.

Summer's Majesty

Young birds of early nesters
hatched in the spring,
have already fluttered
and are past. In summer's
fury to fill in blank spaces
they ride the rich promise
of pomegranate and plum,
of seed-bearing creation.
Life swells with a fever
that stretches the oak;
and when great winds from nowhere
meet branches hopeless
at holding together,
a soft brush of leaves
tells the whole story
as green-globed we spin
through the fingers
of God's passion.

Windows

The colored squares
of neighbors' secrets
shine in the night.
One jar of marigolds
next to the phone
speaks of small pleasures;
and a crack in the mirror
over a mantle
is its own omen.
The street is a gallery
of scenes without doorknobs
where low things are lost
and lives have to fit
the size of their frames.
You pause at the window
blocked by a chairback
feeling something as real
as the pain in a dream.

At Dawn

A dazed bluing covers the hill
and glassy-eyed houses
are too tired to wave
with the lift of a shade.

Even the air resists changing
and settles instead
to compose its own metaphor
of moisture and dust.

When the sun finally comes
and breathes through the haze,
you see, like an angel
the vanishing point
of the first creation.

Finish Line

That night at the hospital
you thought you saw
a dark horse
standing at the foot of your bed
jerking his head
against the cold breeze.

You rang and the nurse
swept your opening death
under straight blankets.
With a steel needle
she strained morphine pastures
into your brain,
and your sister walked for hours
through blurry tears.

But, Aunt Theresa, know this:
at the track not a mile
from your grave,
young thoroughbreds stretch,
training their hooves
to throw sparks.
In a flash they are gone.

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individualism of this secular and so-called scientific age. In closing he asks us to indulge his uncertainty and admire the fact the spiritually he is "still pedaling in midair." But such untethered longing is no great feat — it's what most people do. That this fails to make any of us particularly happy is no surprise.

THE MAID OF ORLEANS

THE MYSTERY OF THE CHARITY OF JOAN OF ARC

Charles Péguy
Adapted by Jean-Paul Lucet,
Translated by Jeffrey Wainwright
Carcanet, $9.50, 92 pp.

Richard Gilman

Charles Péguy is nearly unknown today, in America at least, among the several overlapping kinds of readership he once enjoyed: Catholics of a literary or metaphysical bent, lovers of arduous yet strangely exalted poetry, students of French politics and their arcane relationship to what we think of as "culture." And so it surprised and delighted me to learn that Péguy's great dramatic poem, or poetic drama, *The Mystery of the Charity of Joan of Arc,* has recently been freshly adapted for the stage in France and newly translated for theatrical performance in England.

Péguy — about whom François Mauriac, on hearing of the play's first translation into English (by Julian Green in 1951), said that now he wished someone would translate him into French; whose comment on the Dreyfus case stands out in my memory above all others: "We would have died for Dreyfus but Dreyfus wouldn't die for Dreyfus"; who marvelously defined the "bourgeois mind" as that which "always and inevitably prefers the visible to the invisible" — was killed at forty-one in the first days of World War I while leading his troops in a charge at Villeroy.

Péguy was born in 1873 at Orleans, which is, of course, in a profound manner Joan's city. Of humble origins, he was a brilliant student and won a scholarship to the Ecole Normale Supérieure. While still in his teens he repudiated his ancestral Catholic faith, became an ardent if greatly unconventional socialist, and discovered his literary-philosophical vocation. His eventual output would include poetry, plays, essays, political tracts, and unclassifiable writings that may best be described as mystical reflections grounded in acute social observation. In 1900 he founded the tiny but enormously influential journal *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, and around that time "rediscovered" his faith, though he was never physically to practice it.

What kept him out of the church were, among a complicated set of reasons, chiefly its right-wing politics and defense of privilege, his own wide sense of the betrayal by institutional Christianity of Jesus' injunction to help the poor and suffering, and his inability to accept the ideas of eternal damnation and Hell. (In this he resembles a later writer, Simone Weil.) Joan says in the play: "If it will save from the fires of Hell/the flesh of the damned mad with their hurt,/I give up my flesh to the fires of Hell . . ." This is one note among many that establish Péguy's Joan as a highly unorthodox figure, someone very far in certain respects from the contours of her legend.

The Mystery of the Charity of Joan of Arc is the second of two plays Péguy wrote about the saint. The first, published in 1897, just before the reawakening of his faith, seems to have been wholly conventional in structure and theme, if not in language and music. A sprawling epic (which I've not read; I don't know anybody who has), it covered the major events of Joan's life, beginning with her childhood and ending with her trial and death. Thirteen years later he published the second, radically changed work. The great difference between the two plays, as Julian Green wrote, is that the second is "not an account of Joan's life but rather an attempt to describe the awakening of her supernatural vocation."

As printed (I've no idea how it's been done in performance) the play is in one long act with no formal scene divisions. It employs two other characters, Joan's younger friend, Hauviette, and an invented figure, a nun named Madame Gervaise. There is almost no physical action apart from entrances and exits, so that the "drama" of the piece subsists entirely in the dialogue or, at least as often, in alternating monologues, some of which, Madame Gervaise's imaginative reconstruction of the life of the Virgin, for example, are extremely long.

The play begins with Joan reciting the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary and then saying: "Our Father, our Father . . . how long before your kingdom *does* come?" She is aflame with poetry and yet — the vice of her virtue — is also filled with bitterness over God's silence, his seeming indifference to the evils that beset France. "Must it be that you sent your son in vain?" she asks later, "and will it be said that Jesus died in vain? Will it be said that you did nothing at all to put an end to the great sorrow in the realm of France?"

Hauviette, a model of simple goodhearted devotion, chides Joan for her fierce perfectionism and thirst to take on the sufferings of others. "Where the miserable are miserable once," the younger girl says, "you make yourself miserable a hundred times over." But it is Madame Gervaise, reputed to be a saintly woman but with a keen sense of the world's difficulties, who finally gets through to Joan, without in the least diminishing the girl's ardor or blunting her purpose. Indeed it's Gervaise's realism that gives Joan the beginning of an awareness of what she's going to be called upon to do.

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"Why do you want, sister, to save the dead . . . why do you want to be a better saviour than the Saviour?" Gervaise asks her. And when Joan, one of whose obsessions is that Jesus' friends, most pointedly the Apostles, cravenly abandoned him, says that "the people round here, in Lorraine, French people, they wouldn't have run off and left him . . . never would we have been such cowards," the nun tells her: "We are such cowards every day, poor child, we are such cowards every day." But perhaps most effective of all is Gervaise's long description of what Mary's suffering must have been, a speech designed to instruct Joan in the humility she will one day achieve and carry in the midst of her prowess.

The new adaptation-translation is considerably shorter than Green's version, no doubt for practical reasons of staging. This has the virtue of a clean line and some relief from Péguy's incessant repetitions and reiterations, his penchant for lengthy litanies and extremely minute variations on themes, the sort of thing Mauriac, who fundamentally admired Péguy, was complaining about. But there are losses too, chiefly the dropping of some wonderful lines of Joan's: ". . . you would have to have new saints who would invent new kinds of consolation," and "Your business, Lord, is to bless. When we ask for your blessings, we are making you do your job."

But this is a minor delinquency in an enterprise for which we should be grateful. Péguy was *sui generis,* a man ardently, even fanatically concerned with eternity but one who at the same time was remarkably attuned to the struggles of the temporal. And his drama about Joan, of all saints perhaps the one who best incarnated those two realms of time and being, is disturbing, deeply affecting, bold and lovely . . . as she was. I hope someone has the imagination and wherewithal to put it on stage here.

ALL EYES & EARS TO THE GROUND

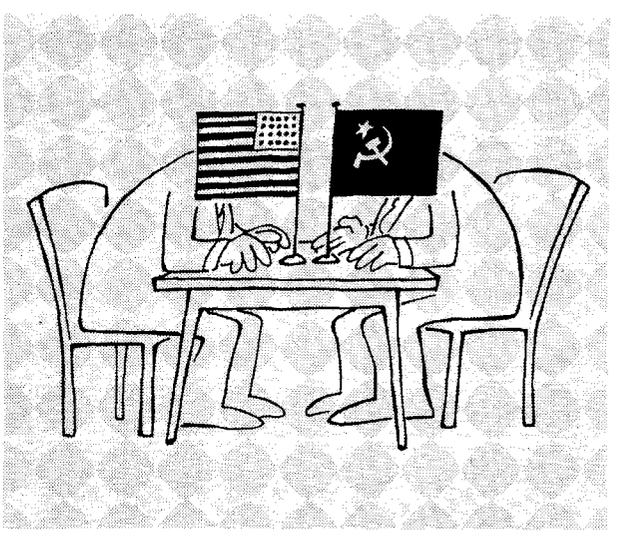
THE VERIFICATION CHALLENGE
PROBLEMS AND PROMISE OF NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL VERIFICATION
Richard A. Scribner, Theodore J. Ralston, William D. Metz
Birkhauser, $9.95, 249 pp.

ARMS CONTROL VERIFICATION
THE TECHNOLOGIES THAT MAKE IT POSSIBLE
Edited by Kosta Tsipis, David W. Hafmeister, Penny Janeway
Pergamon-Brassey, $32.50, 419 pp.

VERIFICATION
HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?
Allan S. Krass
Taylor & Francis, $45, 271 pp.

Jeffrey Richelson

Verification has become a major issue in arms control. Indeed, according to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency it is "the critical element of arms control." Its importance has been evident since at least 1979 when Senator John Glenn and others questioned the ability of the U.S. to verify the proposed SALT II treaty. If the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had not led President Carter to refrain from submitting the prospective treaty for ratification, the verification issue by itself might have prevented ratification. The issue has been of no less importance in the Reagan administration. The frequent reports alleging Soviet noncompliance with the provisions of various treaties and agreements implies the need for adequate verification capabilities — either to detect Soviet transgressions or reassure the eternally suspicious.



Any book on the verification issue can cover some or all of the many aspects of verification. There are the treaties and their provisions. There are the "national technical means" (NTMs) — reconnaissance satellites, intelligence aircraft, and ground stations — used to monitor compliance with the treaties. There are the technologies employed by the NTMs to collect the data and the technologies employed to process it. In addition, there are the analytical techniques and methodologies used to take the processed information and produce estimates of warhead numbers, nuclear test yields, strategic delivery vehicles, and other weapons-system characteristics covered by various agreements.

These topics do not exhaust the list. The politics of verification is another subject worthy of attention, as are past and present compliance issues. And looking toward the future, there is the question of verification requirements associated with possible future arms control arrangements such as a nuclear freeze, Comprehensive Test Ban, or an anti-satellite (ASAT) agreement.

The Verification Challenge is essentially a primer on the subject and deals with a good number of these topics in a way that a novice in the field can understand. Thus the first two chapters of the book provide basic background informa-

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tion: a brief history of nuclear arms control agreements, an introduction to national technical means and compliance issues as well as the role of verification in the arms control process.

Chapters Three and Four deal in more detail with the collection and processing of information. Thus, in Chapter Three we find a discussion of reconnaissance satellites (U.S. and Soviet) and the limitations of satellite surveillance. There is also a discussion of electronic intelligence — specifically the use of radars, aircraft, and ships to monitor missile tests. Finally, seismic detection to monitor test ban treaties is examined. Even as an introduction this chapter is somewhat disappointing as no attempt is made to present an order-of-battle of U.S. and Soviet national technical means. Some of the most important satellites used in monitoring Soviet compliance — the KH-11, RHYOLITE and MAGNUM — are never mentioned. Of more value is the discussion, in Chapter Four, of image and seismic processing — which explains the first step involved in translating the data brought back by NTMs into intelligence. The authors explain how images can be enhanced through a variety of techniques, how explosions can be distinguished from earthquakes, and how the yields of explosions are calculated.

Chapters Five and Six provide a good overview of both past and present compliance issues — thereby demonstrating the application of NTMs to monitoring specific provisions. The authors cover issues raised by the USSR — the concealment of Minuteman silos and the uses of a radar on Shemya Island — as well as those raised by the U.S.: the encryption of telemetry, the testing of two new missiles, and a new early warning radar at Krasnoyarsk. In the penultimate chapter the authors turn their attention to the future — considering the verification requirements associated with possible future arms control agreements.

Arms Control Verification: The Technologies That Make It Possible is intended to be a much more advanced treatment of one particular aspect of verification. The ability of imaging satellites to produce pictures depends on a variety of techniques and technologies — multispectral cameras (with different lenses to detect energy of different frequencies), adaptive optics (which allows compensation for the atmospheric effects that distort space pictures), charged-coupled devices (which are crucial to satellite systems that transmit imagery in real-time), and image enhancement by digital computer. Part 2 of *Arms Control Verification* covers all these areas plus the use of infra-red surveillance.

Part 3 examines the technologies employed in monitoring nuclear testing, ASAT, and the production of nuclear material. Several chapters here are devoted to seismic monitoring — in which the strength of different waves that pass through and along the earth's surface is measured to distinguish between explosions and earthquakes and to determine the yield of a nuclear blast. The use of satellites — such as the Vela and Global Positioning System — to detect nuclear explosions in space and in the atmosphere is also explored. Such satellites have a variety of equipment on them — Bhangmeters, X-Ray Burst Detectors, Dosimeters, and EMP Detectors — to detect different indications of a nuclear blast.

Certainly the concept of devoting a book to the technologies that make national technical means possible is a valid one. Unfortunately *Arms Control Verification* is not very successful in linking up the technologies and verification. Among the problems is that no overview is provided of either the treaty provisions that need to be verified or the national technical means employed in verification. Without having an idea of how adaptive optics or seismic equipment relate to specific NTMs, the information provided about them becomes less useful.

A second problem involves the absence of any consideration of signals intelligence — the intelligence produced by intercepting foreign communications and electronic signals. Given that signals intelligence is a major element in monitoring Soviet missile tests and verifying compliance with warhead limits

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and a variety of other treaty provisions, the failure to treat the subject must be viewed as a rather grave omission. Finally, many of the chapters that deal with the various technologies soon drift off into very technical discussions full of equations. Such discussions do not help convey the essential technical information to the reader. While some individual chapters or portions of chapters provide useful information, the reader should not expect to find an integrated book between the covers so much as a collection of conference papers relating to various aspects of verification.

A much better job of presenting the basics of the technologies essential to verification is to be found in *Verification: How Much Is Enough?* After an introductory chapter Allan S. Krass devotes over one hundred pages to a discussion of such subjects as visible light photography, infra-red detection, radar, image processing, seismology, and electronic reconnaissance. He is able to convey the basic scientific principles involved so that a reader with little or no background can understand the material. If there is a flaw in the chapter it is that the NTMs which employ the technologies are not discussed in sufficient detail. While the author is right to claim that secrecy and contradictory reports concerning the capabilities of NTMs make accurate descriptions difficult, that does not excuse a failure to make the attempt.

In his remaining two chapters prior to the conclusions Krass discusses the politics of verification as well as the link between technology and politics. The politics of verification include the international politics between the U.S. and USSR and the domestic politics within the U.S. The attention devoted to such topics is mandatory because it is unlikely that technology will ever allow absolute certainty in verifying arms control compliance. In some instances which one could cite, those with arms control agendas (pro or con) will be able to interpret the evidence so as to support their own inclinations. Furthermore, in face of the Reagan administration's intention, in part due to alleged Soviet violations, of abandoning SALT II, the politics of verification are likely to become all the more important to emphasize — and examine critically. For it is the differing political presuppositions that help to produce divergent conclusions as to whether the United States can adequately verify a proposed treaty. Such verification is not just a question of monitoring specific provisions of a treaty. It is a question of whether one is largely concerned with

REVIEWERS

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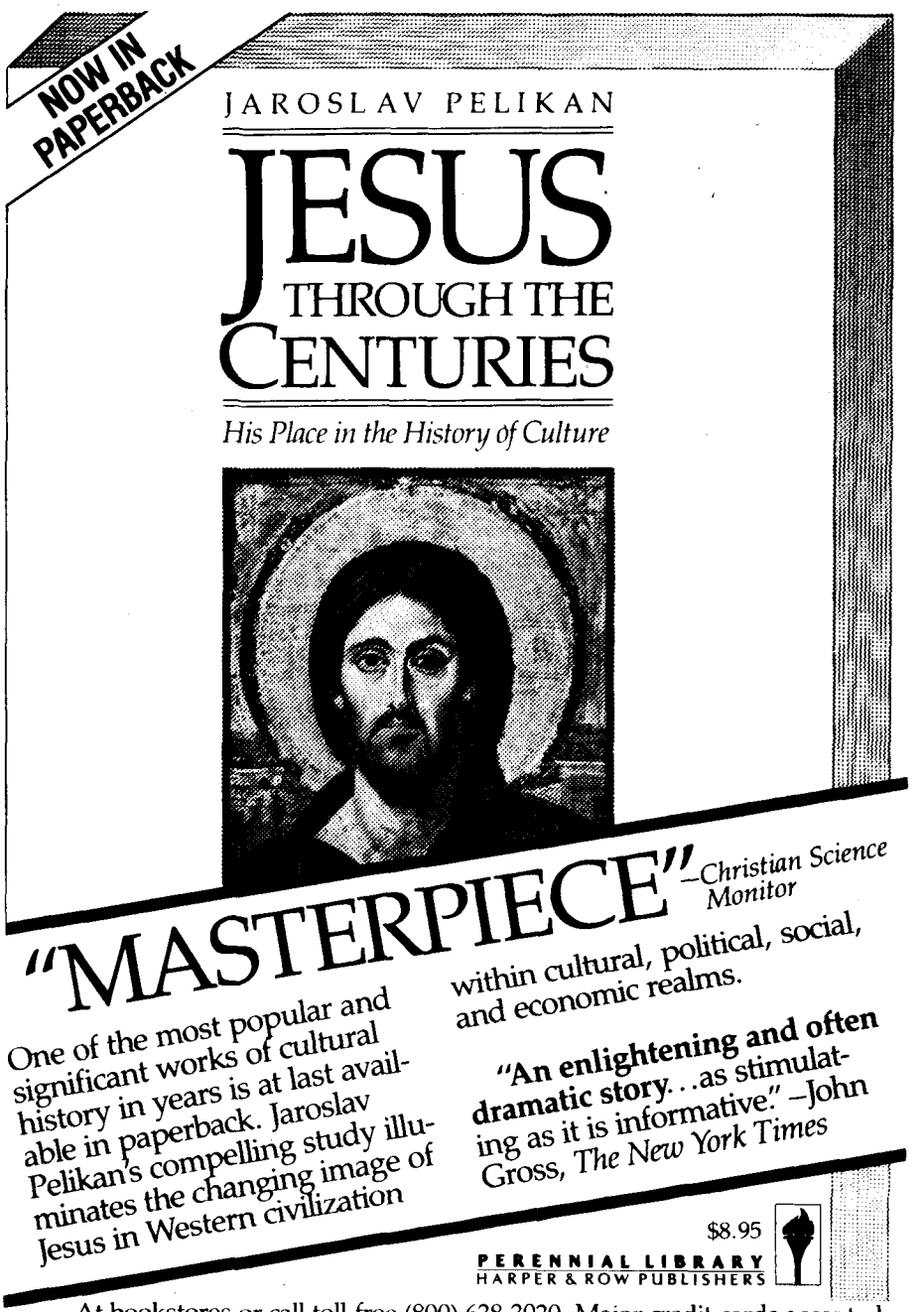
RICHARD GILMAN *was* Commonweal*'s drama critic 1961-1964. His books include* The Making of Modern Drama, Decadence, *and his newly published memoir,* Faith, Sex, Mystery *(Simon and Schuster).*

JEFFREY RICHELSON *is assistant professor of government and public administration at the American University in Washington, D.C. He is the author of several books including* The U.S. Intelligence Community, *and* Sword and Shield.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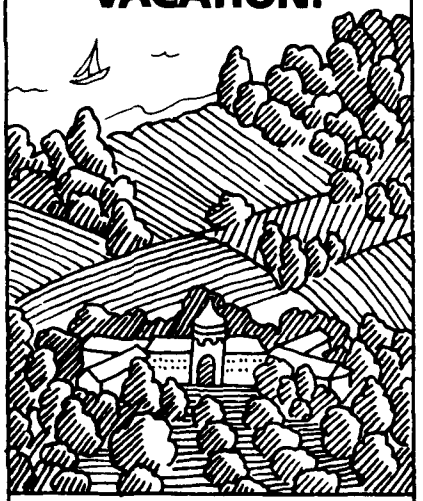

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violations that significantly effect strategic capabilities, or indeed, whether one is concerned with violations at all.

Additional subjects covered in the third chapter are the role of other states, the meaning of adequacy, and the role of trust. Krass's analysis of the differing views of adequacy is particularly valuable.

Also illuminating is Chapter Four on Technology and Politics. Here Krass discusses the political legitimacy of national technical means, the question of telemetry encryption, the problems relating to possible non-compliance, and the evaluation process. Particularly trenchant are his criticisms of the rather bizarre break-out scenarios offered by those who see missiles hidden in every unidentified Soviet building.

None of the three books covers all aspects of verification individually. They do not even do that collectively. Among the most glaring absences is a truly adequate treatment of NTMs and their role in monitoring specific treaty provisions. Additionally, no book adequately treats the problems involved in analyzing (as opposed to processing) the data and making judgments as to whether a treaty provision has been violated. Other sources will be required for a reader to get the complete picture. However, the contributions in these books can play an important part in communicating information about various aspects of verification to beginners and experts.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 66)

ways than one, is scarcely examined by them. Too bad. ED MARCINIAK

Our faith at work

Maplewood, N.J.

To the Editors: It was disappointing to read David R. Carlin, Jr.'s observations on "Vocations to the Laity" [October 10]. His generalizations (Comte and Engels, for instance) added little to my understanding of the Chicago conference and the American lay experience.

The first of the author's "three great obstacles" to on-the-job holiness is a class factor relating to work. "Engineers and college professors may live to work; file clerks and janitors generally work to live." In addition to being elitist, the statement ignores certain realities, introduces a theory without supporting data, and (to my mind) begs the question. The exchange between people in the marketplace is important. Several studies (on computer cottage industries) have shown that many people have a need to come together to experience a "sense of work." It is precisely here, inter-acting with other people who share a common purpose, that we (the laity) are called to bring Christ.

Janitors and file clerks can and do bring that presence, reminding corporate executives (I hope) that a human being's intrinsic value is not related to the size of one's desk — or paycheck. (Pope John Paul II clearly made this point in an early encyclical.)

The "witness" is not the work; it is "working." And while it sounds pietistic, a well-swept floor—given the proper motivation — may be a path to holiness. More likely, it is the dignity of the sweeper, the depth of faith, and a clear concern for others that actualizes the words of Christianity. Building better reactors is no more likely to make one holy than washing shirts. Our holiness is not in our jobs, but in ourselves. And while the very idea of "holiness" may make many of us uncomfortable — given present lifestyles and values — it is dishonest to believe we are called to less. We *must* express our faith in and at our work.

Mr. Carlin skates over the thin ice separating voluntary victimhood and a spirit of sacrifice. Is there no consideration of "justice" in the "Christian attitudes" he would have us bring to our jobs? This seems an important distinction.

His closing remarks help us appreciate the author's dilemma. "In this world of religious privatization and linguistic secularization, it is difficult to see how worldly occupations can even be discussed as religious vocations, let alone

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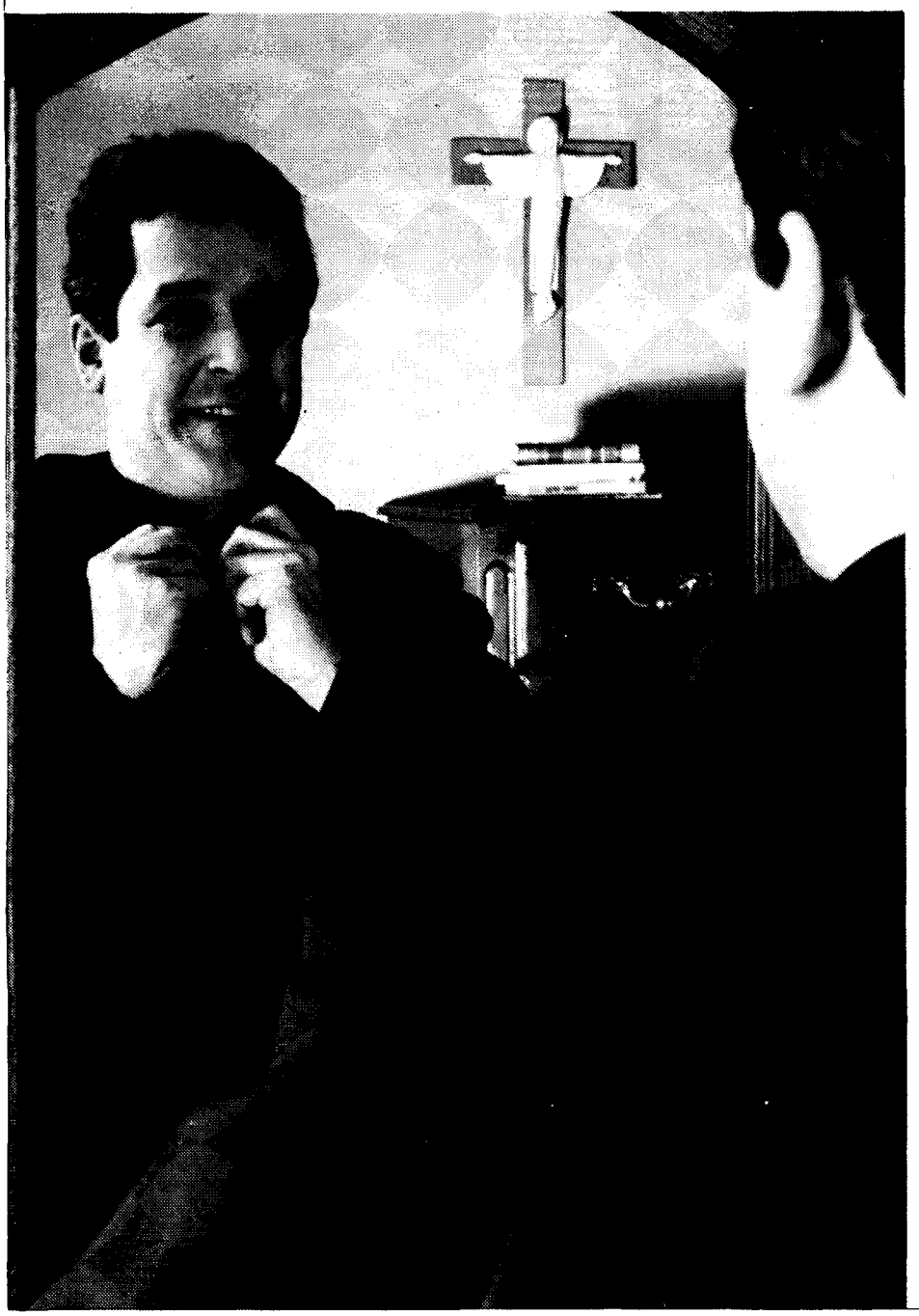

Nice clothes. A nice car. The newest stereo system. A lot of people grow up thinking that material success is all it takes to be happy.

When it doesn't work out they become disappointed and disillusioned. They have this gnawing feeling that there ought to be more to life but they don't know where to look for it.

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exist as such in actual fact . . .'' Discussion and development of theology are important; but the reality is already being lived by many people of many ''classes'' and occupations. Our difficulties in articulating this reality, in presenting a formal explanation, should not blind us to what is happening. Our vocation ''in actual fact'' is in the world. Our Catholic press often reflects the Gospel values being lived in our time by those extraordinary, ordinary-seeming people who are the life blood of the Mystical Body of church . . .

I am reminded of the haunting Gospel story of the young man (probably he had a good job) who came to Christ and said he wanted to ''do more.'' When Jesus told the young man how to fulfill that desire, the young man went away saddened. The point of that story is no less valid in 1987 than it was in 1492, in 1066, or on the day of the telling!

ROBERT DYLAK

Nicaragua & the left

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: I have just written my two senators (Moynihan and D'Amato) asking them to vote to rescind the remaining $40 million for the *contras*. That having been noted, I found John Cort's ''Raised Voices in Nicaragua'' [November 21] annoying and disturbing.

Annoying because his report was so predictable and reflects an inability or unwillingness on the part of so many of the so-called Christian left to probe what is going on in Nicaragua.

Did not Mr. Cort attend a local CSD meeting (Committee for the Sandinista Defense)? I did when I was there two years ago. It was hardly democracy in action; rather, the Sandinista leader (a woman) gave a rather pedantic, even insulting indoctrination to the peasants of the barrio in Leon.

Did not Mr. Cort discover that these same peasants need ration cards, and that in order to have a card one must be a true-blue Sandinista? And what of the party control of the television (all media for that matter)? Such a system is more than a version of Richard Daley's southside Chicago precinct-based fiefdom, and it has not evolved simply due to the illegal and cruel interference by Reagan and the *contras*.

It has been planned and long in coming. Tomas Borge, the interior minister (*sic* police) is an avowed supporter of his mentor Fidel Castro. Moreover, Borge wields great power and his influence in the directorate is growing. He is a man worth watching. He may end up on top, aided by Reagan's stupid approach.

I am surprised that Mr. Cort would actually dwell upon the differences between the crowded, enthusiastic ''revolutionary'' Mass and the staid, sparsely attended ''bourgeois'' Mass, as if that's the criterion for evaluating the life of peoples and their future. What a pity. (Dostoevsky in his Grand Inquisitor passage confronts nobly and directly what is really at stake in such situations.)

What is disturbing about Mr. Cort's report is his favorable use of the expression ''Christian ideology.'' Of its nature Christian faith cannot be ideological — how dare we, how foolishly do we, restrict God, his Spirit?

Mr. Cort concludes that he is hopeful that the newly appointed papal nuncio will play a positive and moderating role between the Sandinistas and the hierarchical church. Yet, among other things, the nuncio said upon his arrival that ''good Christians'' obey the laws of their country. Really? All laws, any laws, any time? Again what a pity for Mr. Cort to subscribe so quickly to anything that might bring a modicum of peace. Blind obedience.

Doesn't that have a disturbing ring? Haven't we in the twentieth century seen enough of ''obedience,'' enough ''nationalism,'' enough ''ideology''?

For sure the Sandinistas will not be a threat to the world, but they may be a threat to the Nicaraguan people if Mr. Borge and his crowd finally win out. And whose side should the Christian left be on?

GEOFFREY B. GNEUHS

In Abigail McCarthy's column ''Readers & Writers'' [January 16], a printer's error mistakenly called the Kentucky Book Fair the Kennedy Book Fair.

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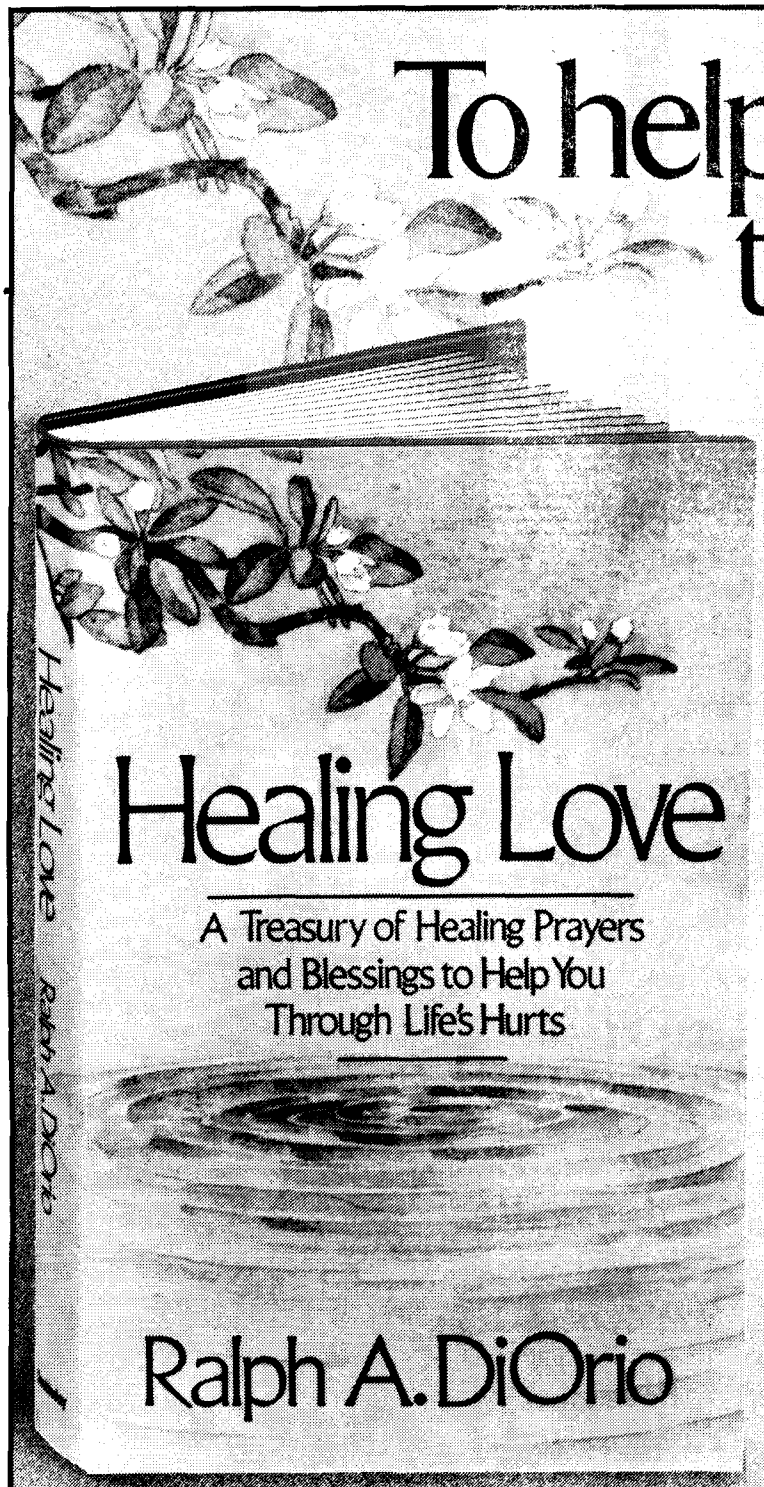

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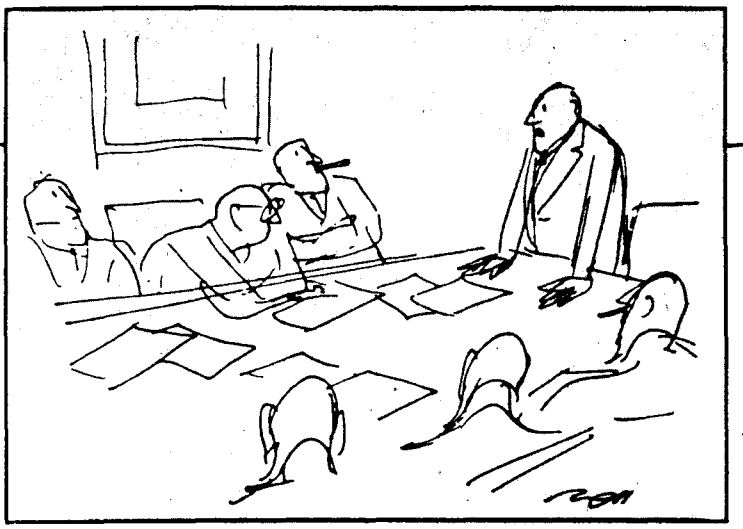

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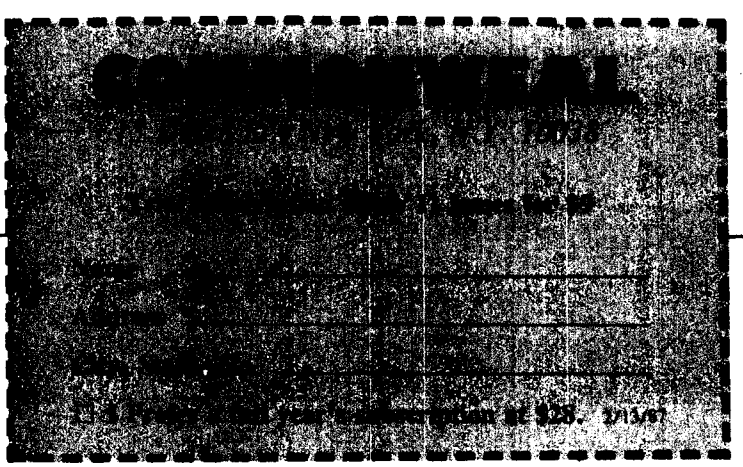

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